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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

SEMICENTENNIAL PUBLICATIONS

Authorized by the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado and prepared under the supervision of a committee of the Faculty consisting of William R. Arthur, George F. Reynolds, Oliver C. Lester, Herbert S. Evans, C. Henry Smith, and Maurice H. Rees, these five volumes are issued as part of the celebration of the Semicentennial of the University, November, 1927. They will be of interest primarily to the people of this State and are appropriately

DEDICATED TO

THE CITIZENS OF COLORADO

THE CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE AND MODERN LIFE

BY

FRANCIS JOHN MCCONNELL
FREDERICK J. E. WOODBRIDGE
ROSCOE POUND
LORADO TAFT
ROBERT A. MILLIKAN
PAUL SHOREY

Published by the University of Colorado
BOULDER, COLORADO
1928

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By the University of Colorado
Published June, 1928

WELCH-HAFFNER PRINTING CO.
PRINTERS
DENVER, COLORADO

CONTENTS

PAGE

Introduction ix
George Norlin

Religion and Modern Life 3
Francis John McConnell

Philosophy and Modern Life 35
Frederick J. E. Woodbridge

The Social Order and Modern Life 71
Roscoe Pound

Art and Modern Life 107
Lorado Taft

Science and Modern Life 141
Robert A. Millikan

Literature and Modern Life 171
Paul Shorey

INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth and last volume of the University Semi-Centennial Publications. The first four volumes deal with Colorado: its geology, botany, zoology and its human story—in a word, the material and spiritual setting of its people; and the purpose of these volumes is to give, primarily to the residents of Colorado, a better knowledge and appreciation of their own state. This volume, while of equal interest to thoughtful readers in other states and countries, is no less local in its aim: it is part of the effort of the University, as an instrumentality through which the State strives to attain a more complete life, to take stock of itself on its fiftieth birthday and see more clearly its proper task of preserving and setting at work in our everyday existence the permanent values of the intellectual and spiritual inheritance of civilized man.

Many are so heedless as to think of that inheritance as an obstacle to progress—as something which lays its "dead hand" upon us and holds us back when we would press on. They would "let the dead bury their own

dead": they would divorce education from all endeavor to create, or rather recreate, 'backgrounds', and would devote it mainly or entirely to training in the technique of present-day life.

It is not difficult to understand this point of view. It is altogether too easy to think of civilization in terms of railroads, motor cars, airplanes, telephones, the radio, and the like, and to forget that it does not really consist of any or all of these devices but rather of the 'backgrounds' which make them possible and which our revolutionists would discard. An untutored savage can, for example, be taught to drive a motor car as quickly, perhaps more quickly than a doctor of physics fresh from a modern university. But should he and his kind wreck all the motor vehicles in existence, they would be powerless to rebuild a single one of them, whereas scientists would in such an event proceed to apply again the knowledge treasured up in the archives of civilization. But should we all revert to savagery to the extent of losing entirely those 'backgrounds' whose applications are so modern but which have been created by the patient labor and research of centuries, not only

would further technical progress be brought to an end at once but the technical advances which have already been made would be wiped out in a generation. And science is but a part of our inheritance.

"We stand upon the shoulders of our ancestors and we can see farther than they", said John Bright in a speech deprecating too much attention to the past. That sounds well and in its context expresses a measure of truth. But in fact we do not find ourselves by the accident of mere birth into a civilized society, upon the shoulders of those who have achieved civilization. The children of civilized and of savage parents are not materially different in infancy and are not always materially different in later life. We do not become civilized in the real sense until by education—by study and labor—we enter into the labors of others through the centuries and possess ourselves of the fruits thereof —until, in other words, by training we have caught step with the forward strides of the race. We must first climb to the shoulders of our ancestors before we can see farther than they. And it is exactly the business of universities to enable each generation thus to climb and see farther.

What is it, then, to stand upon the shoulders of our ancestors? Or, to change the figure, what are the forward strides of the race? What, in a word, are the things of permanent value in civilization—the things which are too precious not to hand on to the future?

It was in the desire to emphasize these values that the University on its fiftieth anniversary centered its celebration in a symposium of addresses under the general title *The Creative Intelligence and Modern Life.* The subdivision of this theme was no easy matter. The whole field of learning is now so vast and so cut up into specialties that when one begins to parcel it out, there is no end. Nevertheless, the Committee on the Semi-Centennial Celebration decided—not without a degree of heroism—upon the attempt to divide it into the large topics of Religion, Philosophy, Art, Science, Literature, and the Social Order, and to secure as speakers scholars and writers who were eminent the world over not only for their specialized knowledge but also for their ability to see their parts in relation to the larger whole and to present them in a manner to carry interest and meaning to all thinking men.

The result of this attempt—which, I may say, proved more successful than the Committee hoped—is this book, which is published with grateful acknowledgment to the distinguished scholars who have contributed to its lasting value.

GEORGE NORLIN,
President

RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE

RELIGION AND MODERN LIFE

FRANCIS JOHN McCONNELL

I am to speak on Religion and Modern Life. It would of course be possible so to define religion, or the religious spirit, as to include everything from the latest developments of Christianity to the superstitions of Central African tribes, but I wish to speak this morning for our own geographical latitude and longitude. I limit myself therefore to Christianity,—Catholic and Protestant,—and the Judaism out of which Christianity springs. These religious points of view are at their center alike in their thought of God and man, —and their conception of God and man may be assumed as familiar to an audience like this.

By "modern life" I mean present-day life, especially in its wider social reaches. I shall not say much about religion in its more individualistic aspects. Altogether too one-sided stress has been laid upon limited individualism in religion in the past four or five centuries. In the days of the Hebrew prophets nobody failed to catch the import of the messages of those prophets for the common life of the time.

In the period of Christianity before the Reformation the Church conceived it as her function to attempt to control all phases of human social activity in the name of Christian principle. The Church told Kings when they could, and could not, go to war, and laid down rules which attempted the impossible task of humanizing war. The Church controlled the institution of marriage, claimed the educational processes as peculiarly her own, and with her idea of the "just price" entered as an effective factor into the market-place. It does not break the force of the significance of the medieval Church for the broader phases of human "living-together" to point out that the Church herself was not always loyal to her own principles. She seldom compromised in the statement of the ideal, no matter how far short she now and again fell in practice.

After the principles of the Reformation got thoroughly to work, field after field which had once been the domain of organized religion was surrendered to secularism. The realm of international relations became a no-man's land, so far as Christian ideals went. Marriage became more and more an affair of the civil courts,—especially as to the property

interests involved. Education passed increasingly to the state, while industry and commerce went off "on their own". Mr. R. H. Tawney has shown how Protestant doctrine helped to unleash forces in industry and trade which, in their extreme capitalistic development, have resulted not merely in secularization, but in paganism and barbarism,—if not in savagery.

Some adherents of Christianity, more particularly of the Protestant sects, tell us that our chief difficulties would solve themselves if we could make all individuals personally religious in their inner spiritual life. It seems a commonplace in the ordinary religious circles to maintain that so-called individual conversion would cure all the world's social ills. No claim could ever be more completely rebutted by historic facts than this has been. If an individual becomes personally religious without progressively seeking to carry his spiritual principles into wider and wider social applications, he becomes a positive menace to the community, for he baptizes his shrinking, dwindling notions with a holy sanction. If religion cannot take for its sphere the international contacts, for example, the intensifica-

tion of zeal will only make the converted man a fiercer fighter for national aims working against any large humanity whatsoever.

But what can we do? We cannot go back to the old days of formal decree by the Church. There is no one Church; and if there were, the method of formal decree is hopelessly out-of-date. We can, however, look to the socially controlling force in our day and seek to make our ideals count in the workings of that force. The force itself is what we call public opinion. To a greater degree than we are willing to admit, we are at the mercy of social atmospheres and climates. We live in an age of propaganda. My own memory goes back far enough to remember when political corruption took the form of bribing legislators outright. It is only occasionally that such crude methods are resorted to today. The up-to-date technique is, through control of news-sources, or magazine columns, or book-publishing houses, or any powers which reach the public mind, to create a demand which legislatures and other agencies of the popular will do not dare to defy or ignore. What is thus used at times for evil purposes may be used for good,—though admittedly propa-

ganda for specific ends involves its own special moral and social perils. It is wholly permissible and indeed mandatory, however, for organized religion to work its own ideals into the community atmosphere in which social good thrives and social evil withers. When I was a child I was considerably disturbed by the pictures in the books on geology describing the mighty monsters which splashed about in prehistoric swamps. I wondered who went forth to kill those gigantic beasts. I arrived at quite a significant intellectual mile-post when I discovered that nobody killed them. The climate changed,—and they died and left no descendants like themselves. The changed atmosphere made it possible for higher types to get a start.

It is admittedly fitting on an occasion like this to look at some values which religion and education may unite in holding so effectively before the public mind that they get inescapably into the popular standard and criterion. We can work together in exalting what we call somewhat loosely the human values. The religion in the midst of which we live is based on an age-old assumption that the central result of religious effort is human life at its

highest and best. Religion is indeed an attempt by men to make adjustment to the unseen forces of the universe. Judaism and Christianity at their highest have always maintained that such successful adjustment bears witness to itself in the grade and quality of life produced in the worshipper. The test of belief is the believer. Judaism and Christianity also have been alike in seizing the most nobly human as at least adumbration of the divine. They have no sooner reached a moral insight binding for men than they have dared to think of it as binding for God,—and they have no sooner seized what appears fitting as marking the divine character than they have held up the same ideal as significant for human character.

Let us begin with the relation of religion and science today. We hear a good deal about the reconciliation of science and religion. Perhaps the true reconciliation is to come through cooperative effort of science and religion—and perhaps also religion and education can together hold up worthy human ideals before science.

Here we are met by the claim that science is to be sought for science's own sake, without

any regard to any human consequences. When men speak thus they usually have in mind the more material consequences. They mean to say that scientists should seek knowledge for the knowledge itself. They intend to glorify pure research as such. Usually, however, they end by telling us that the practical scientific results become meager as soon as we begin to disparage research on its own account, —and thus they justify pure research by its material outcome.

Now the religious thinker has no interest in disparaging pure research. He himself never wearies of praising those who seek spiritual goods for what they are, without regard to matter-of-fact consequences. Professor A. E. Taylor, of England, has recently remarked that probably no single individual has ever done more for modern civilization than St. Francis of Assisi,—the one man of all men who cared least about civilization. By unresting quest of the unworldly St. Francis made the world morally worth-while. Practical consequences to one side, however, it is the privilege and duty of religion and education together to bring out more sharply the human reference in the pursuit of knowledge. The most im-

personal scientist has some principle of selection for his facts. Of course the candidates for the Ph. D. degree leave no dry-as-dust possibilities unexplored in their theses, but ripened scholarship acts on the assumption, though the assumption may never be openly stated, that some facts are "inherently" more important than others, or fit into systems more neatly than others, or are more productive than others. In dealing with the mass of scientific facts we must resort to some standard of selection; and this standard must be set up by human beings under the necessary choice of some scale of human interests. It is our duty, of course, to follow whither truth leads us, but we act on the belief that obedience to the truth itself leads to the type of human character which we take as ideal. More than that,—we admire the thinker whose soul gets its "thrill" out of the seizure of high truth. In spite of what we say to the contrary we are all thrill-hunters. Life takes its consciousness of values largely from the realm of feeling.

Now it would be a help if organized religion and organized education could speak more definitely on what makes facts significant. We

shall not shrink from realism in the sphere of historical research, for example, but we may well question whether the continued contemplation of the seamy sides of historical processes after all sharpens our eyes to detect all the truth in history. A powerful political leader may use an idealistic slogan to get the public opinion of his nation to support a war which he seeks for economically imperialistic purposes. The study of the actual steps by which the leader deceived the people is altogether worth-while, but the other fact remains that the people are deceived, if we assume the politician's selfish success. The mass of them do not expect a dollar's worth of gain. They know that all they can get, materially speaking, is increased taxes. They think they are voting for a high ideal. The possibility of deceiving men by pointing to an ideal means more than that the mass of mankind are just easily gullible.

I am pleading not for invective,—certainly not for censorship,—but for a more genial and kindly human atmosphere in the search for truth. We have come to see that a fact is not necessarily important because it is deadly dry,—though astonishing claims are still set

up for facts, which seem void of human significance. Some years ago I attempted in a speech at a college the hazardous exploit of trying to poke fun at then current methods of research in English literature. I called attention to the fact that a glance at the dictionary reveals that some English letters stand at the beginning of more words than do others. There are obviously more words beginning with E than with X. I suggested that a dictionary curve be constructed on this principle, after counting all the words under each letter. Then I suggested that the student construct a Shakespeare curve by counting and classifying the words of Shakespeare according to the initial letters and tabulating the results. By plotting the dictionary curve and the Shakespeare curve on the same chart the student could measure Shakespeare's fidelity to a standard of English. I intended this as a pleasantry, but alas, I had no sooner resumed my seat than I was informed that I had been ridiculing a method then looked upon as promising for the settlement of the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy!

We are learning that not all facts are equally important,—that even scientific intellectual

energy may waste itself. Is it too much to hope that we shall be able to one day generate a more human atmosphere through which to look at facts,—an atmosphere in which the assumption that the ugly and the false are not necessarily the stepping-stones to all the truth, or to the central truth,—may have its part?

This may seem only remotely connected with religion. Let us glance then at a realm where religion can definitely offer suggestions. Consider the assumptions of the scientist in his interpretations of the universe. For productive and fertile research in the laboratory the scientist does not need to make any assumptions, except that antecedents and consequences come and go according to law. He may be completely positivistic. He may rule out God, freedom, and immortality as utterly irrelevant for his purpose. We can have psychology without a self, if we are studying processions or successions of mental states. All this is thoroughly legitimate. The instant, however, the scientist steps away from this positivistic schedule to talk of backlying forces,—of true causes in the deeper sense, he is talking philosophy. Here the upholder of

any religion has a right to cross-question him as to his assumptions. As soon as the scientist stirs out of this positivist procedure he becomes a man of faith,—and he must meet the same questions that all other believers and holders of faiths meet. The believer in religion is entirely within his rights in asking the scientist to bring his assumptions out where we can look at them. All battles as to the meaning of the universe are fought out chiefly over the assumptions. Of this more later.

May I suggest a single instance of working together by religion and science to the vast good of mankind? I refer to the conquest of that belief in witchcraft which obtained in Christendom until within comparatively recent times. Not many generations ago a foremost English jurist pronounced the legal evidence for witchcraft indubitable, and John Wesley declared that men could not give up the belief in witchcraft without surrendering the authority of the Scriptures. Here was a belief deep-seated in the human consciousness,—a belief that in one form or another grips the majority of mankind outside of Christendom to this day. What robbed it of its power over us? Nobody overthrew witch-

craft by direct and frontal attack. If one chooses to cling fast to witches I do not know that there is any formal argument which will loosen the grasp. If one chose to do so, one might find quite considerable bodies of facts which lend themselves easily to witchcraft as their explanation. What has delivered the mind of man from witches? The scientific habit of thinking, together with a growing consciousness of the dignity of man. Acceptance of witchcraft cannot well go hand-in-hand with the temper which the study of natural forces begets; nor does it seem quite worthy of a being such as Christianity conceives man to be to think of him as a hag-ridden puppet. If it be replied that it took Christian thought a long time to attain such a conception of human dignity, we cheerfully admit the fact. Christianity had to await the unfolding of many forces both inside and outside of itself before some of her own essentials could stand clear,—but once seen the validity of these essentials is self-evidencing.

A second task at which religion and education can cooperate today is in what might be called the prophetic judgment of social institutions. I use the term "prophetic judg-

ment" to distinguish it from criticism for criticism's own sake, or from fault-finding of a cynical mood,—or from any other criticism which does not spring from a desire to exalt the human values. All the Old Testament prophets, who loaded the word "prophetic" with its distinctive content, judged the institutions of their times by their effects on human character and behavior. The law of their day was in itself regarded as sacred, but the prophets dared challenge it in the name of human welfare.

In the name of human welfare we are seeing institutions challenged today,—both religious and educational agencies doing their share of the challenging. Religious and educational institutions have themselves had to meet the human test. As long as creeds were looked upon as in themselves embodiments of final truth, valid on their own account, they were fairly immune from criticism. Since the era of Immanuel Kant, however, even the existence of God has been conceived of as lying outside of the sphere of strict demonstration; and in spite of the claim of inherent sacredness in the creeds, they are more and more regarded as instrumental statements to be judged by

their effects in use, like other instruments. Instead of diminishing the significance of religious beliefs the instrumental conception of their nature makes them all the more important. We speak today of religious conceptions as tools,—or as spiritual garments, or spiritual food. With commendable tolerance we leave it to the individual himself to say what creedal tool he uses or what doctrinal garment he puts on, or what spiritual food he eats. This does not mean, however, that all religious beliefs are alike significant,—or insignificant. We live in a tool age,—and the search for better instruments is not confined merely to creations of steel. We are seeking for the best intellectual, and moral, and spiritual instruments. This is indeed a day of extreme fashions in clothes and in beliefs,—but some clothes and some beliefs are more hygienic than others; and neither doctrines nor garments dare to be too defiant of the cosmic conditions in which we live. Finally, the seriousness of the problem of the best foods today is reflected in our not too-intelligent talk about proteins and carbo-hydrates and calories. Equally important are inquiries as to the quality and degree of nutriment for human minds and hearts

and wills in the religious beliefs which currently abound.

All orthodoxies today confront the same question as to their fitness to minister to the needs of human beings under actual mundane conditions. Religion and education have done much to develop within themselves what the scientists might call the anti-bodies, or anti-toxins, which counteract the poisons of the organisms themselves, but all social institutions need outside criticism. Self-criticism, rigorous as it may be, may shrink from laying caustic touch upon the deadliest focus of disease. Moreover, there are in all institutionally organized activities vested interests which reveal amazing vitality in survival. It required a long time for the insistent human question: "What happens to the child who goes to school?" to achieve some elemental changes in case-hardened courses, and methods, which virtually looked upon schools and teachers as ends-in-themselves.

Religion and education do not stop,—and ought not to stop,—with themselves. If they are together to guard intellectual and moral interests in human life they have a right to protest against political and industrial evils

which make the enjoyment of such interests impossible. There would be no sense in preaching goodness, truth, and beauty to individuals in a society which made goodness impossible to attain, dishonesty the key to success, and ugliness the test of art.

To come to close quarters here with an issue of immediate and pressing urgency, consider for a moment the cult of nationalism which is being preached today in our land with all the ardor of a religious revival. He would indeed be a sorry wretch who would desire to be any whit less than one-hundred-per-cent in his patriotism, but this new cult is far short of one-hundred-per-cent when it insists upon censoring the teachings of schools, and upon making the emblems of a nation more sacred than the symbols of religious faith, and upon fostering that warlike spirit which is the ruin both of religion and science. The most important prophetic function in a democracy is the call to democracy itself to be loyal to the human values which are the sole justification of democratic method. For democratic method,—in distinction from the democratic ideal, —is bungling and costly as compared with the swifter, more precise motions of autocracy.

The age-old fault of autocracy is the ease with which it becomes callous to the elemental human needs. If public opinion is to be more human and humane than autocracy it must provide place for the religion which cries aloud and spares not concerning what is highest and best for men,—and for the trained expert who seeks out the ways to realize the human ideal.

Once more, our modern life is searching for ways and means to unlock powers,—powers in the world of nature and in the souls of men. Here again any religion which at all understands itself is striving to release moral possibilities in human wills. We hear occasionally question as to whether there is, or can properly be, any valid difference between religious education and other forms of education. Certainly, if there is still force in the old statement that education is a leading forth, or a drawing forth, of the powers of life, we may truly call the aim of religion a calling forth of human possibilities.

Judaism and Christianity are fundamentally religions which do not believe in throwing anything away. They are saving religions,—religions of salvation. It is indeed true that there have been periods when Christianity

has been repressive. Anyone who has ever lived under the stiff sway of the old puritanic Spirit knows what a dreadful deadweight that Puritanism could be. A few years of my boyhood were spent in a community settled from New England in a day when repression was thought to be the mark of genuine religion, —and something of the repressive temper still persisted fifty years ago. How well I recall the dreariness of Sunday! At times yet on Sunday afternoon at about four o'clock, I find a strange melancholy foreboding creeping over me,—quite alarming until I recognize it as a remnant of the Sunday afternoon mood of my boyhood,—the survival of the haunting fear which used to come upon me at about four o'clock that perhaps I would not live through till Monday morning.

Of course, bad as Puritanism was in its later echoes, it can be historically understood and justified. We have only to read the diary of Mr. Samuel Pepys to realize the urgency of the moral plight which made pertinent the Puritan protest. But we have travelled far enough away from any vestigial remains of Puritanism. The youngsters of today do not know what the word means, to say nothing of

the reality itself. Now we hear that our supreme duty is to let ourselves go in any and all directions. If we cannot let ourselves go in all directions at once, let us at least leave no direction untried. Self-expression is the charmed word. Now if all those who thus crave expression could go to some desert island and express themselves I do not know that there could be serious objection, but when neighbors and by-standers and passers-by have to witness all this letting-go and self-expression we have a social problem of no small proportions. A foremost American city has a park within its limits kept up on the plan of allowing everything there to grow wild, so that the successive generations may see just what wild woodland is. A distinguished naturalist has suggested that the European nations cooperate in enclosing sections of Africa and India as wild-life reservations, so that those who come after us can behold nature in her untamed ferocity. There is something to be said for such policies, for we do not have to gaze upon the scenes of wild life unless we choose. We have at least to pay a car-fare to get to the wild-life park in the city, and we should have to go to heavy expense indeed to get a glimpse

at Africa's lions and India's tigers. If we had likewise some satisfactory scheme for parking our wild intellectual and moral self-expressionists we should be fortunate, for then we could let the wildness express itself without finding it under our eyes,—or worse still, under our noses. The worst of it all is that after a while this expression becomes monotonous and boring. About all the possibilities of wildness have been tried out in the course of human history. All these later wildnesses are amateurish bizarre variations of a theme as old as Egypt and Babylon. There is indeed something thrilling for the instant in suddenly confronting the wild and untamed, but after a season it becomes common enough. It ceases to be a peril and becomes a nuisance. Self-expression for one's self may be an important exercise, but it is a sad waste of time for those who are compelled to be spectators, unless the self is worth expressing.

Now religion, I repeat, is not repression, —and it is not an unbridled letting-go. All the phrases which describe essentially Christian experience at least imply that the purpose of religion is not to stamp out human possibilities, but to draw them out to the full, and to

use them for high purposes. Conversion means not that any part of a life is destroyed but that the forces are directed to new channels. New birth means what it says,—life, and not death.

We might be helped here by applying to moral problems the implications of the scientific idea of control. The scientist is certainly not trying to check the forces of nature just for the sake of checking them. He is trying to bridle them,—to harness them for good ends. Even if he is seeking to destroy some lower organisms he is aiming at utilizing the resources of nature for the nourishment of higher organisms. Self-control in speech means not the constant checking of one's self into silence, but the power to say what ought to be said when it ought to be said.

The founder of Christianity called upon men to take his yoke upon them if they would learn of him. In any field of learning the yoke is the symbol not of bondage but of mastery. The wild, untamed thinking is not as strong as controlled thinking, just as wild untamed physical strength is not capable, through even a moderately long strain, of putting forth the energy that the domesticated

strength can exert. Except for just a sudden frantic lunging about, a wild horse is not as strong as a tame horse.

The important discoveries by the mind of man were not made in any sudden bursts of unregulated might. Swift insights do flash upon intellects but if they are worth while they are the quick ripening of long processes of brooding. The mathematical discoveries which have meant so much for the mastery of the world do not impress us as having been seized in any fierce moments of letting the self go in luxuriant self-expression. The invention of logarithms, the formulation of the binomial theorem, or of Taylor's theorem, the fruitful speculations of Darwin and the experiments of Pasteur, were possible only to minds controlled into the habit of prolonged and sustained attention. The mark of intellectual wildness is that it cannot pay attention for long. If those who overwhelm us with the current output of self-expression could only be prevailed upon to throw half their stuff away as of interest only to themselves,—and to withdraw the other half from public view until it has been hammered into shape by sustained intellectual and moral control, we should be gainers

all around. Both organized religion and organized education, mistaken as their methods have now and again been, stand together, not for intellectual and moral repression, but for the productive control of expression. Redemptive processes, wherever found, are much alike. They imply and involve the conversion of aims from a lower object to a higher,—a substitution of a nobler purpose for a baser, —the sublimation of the grosser into the finer.

Finally, religion always has aimed at making men at home in the universe,—the universe conceived of as friendly. We are hearing today of the incentives which must obtain in a new social order, if that order is to be founded more upon unselfishness than is the present. The most depressing, debilitating question which we can ask is: "What's the use?" I am well aware that there are those who tell us that the most splendid of all moral spectacles is a hero standing up in the face of a hostile universe and defying that universe to the last, —going down with an unconquered cheer. Still, it would seem good sense not to pronounce the universe unfriendly until we have to. It is curious to note how the reasoning which makes man nothing in the universe ends

by leaving us with a suspicion that, even on the basis of such reasoning, man amounts to a good deal after all. For example, it is a favorite expedient of those who preach the littleness of man to lay stress on the immensity of the distances in the physical universe, and the insignificance of the earth which is the home of man. The universe is to be measured in terms of light years,—the distance which a ray of light flying at 186,000 miles a second will travel in a year. In a system of such spatial stretches as ours the earth is not anywhere near the physical center. We dwell down a land,—almost a blind alley,—off the main thoroughfare. If a celestial express were to journey through the universe, travelling with the speed of light, to gaze upon the sights worth seeing, it would not get down to such a trifling detail as the earth short of a century.

This brand of speech is easy enough. Anybody with a little astronomical information and a grain or two of imagination can utter it. The difficulty with all such deliverances is that they leave us with the question: "Who found out all this?",—and that leads pretty far. The astonishing bigness of the universe does not report itself. It has to be measured,

—and we cannot help wondering if the measurer of the bigness is not after all greater than the bigness itself. Who discovered the speed of light? Who calculates the schedules and tables according to which the stars move? Who, at a distance of light-years, weighs suns and tells the stuff of which they are made? Who manipulates these light-year units so deftly and precisely? If the universe proceeds according to mathematical formulas, and if man can read off the formulas, we must concede a kinship between man and the universe which does not on the face of it imply the hostility of the universe.

The most recent expression of the inability of man to make anything at all of the universe which I have noticed, takes the form of a simple illustration. A herd of cows are feeding in a pasture. An express train tears past the field and the cows break into a terrified scamper,—thinking that the train is chasing them. Man is equally foolish and absurd when he interprets the vast doings of the universe as if they had reference to himself,—we are told.

The illustration makes its appeal to all of us, when in moods of baffled bewilderment we reflect upon the helplessness of man in the

scheme of things. But the illustration is not quite adequate. Suppose some sage member of the herd endowed with a degree of intelligence as well able to comprehend express trains as is the mind of man to seize cosmic processes. Suppose the herd responsive enough to the instruction of its wise leader to learn quite a number of items about railroad trains, —the schedules of their coming, and their unchanging course on a fixed track. Suppose the herd mathematically-minded enough to comprehend how locomotives are built,—the stresses and strains that material can endure, —the mechanism by which power is applied through piston to drive-wheel,—the transformation of the energy to coal through steam into pressure,—the ratio of power to speed, —with some guess at the conservation of energy. If the herd,—or any member of it,— could do all this, the parallelism to the condition of man in the universe would be a little closer. It is quite a favorite trick with some thinkers to use illustrations based on what animals would conclude if they took to philosophizing about the universe. In ancient Greece a wit suggested that if an ox were to speculate about the force back of the universe

he would think of that force as ox-like in form, —which all seems, not only amusing, but a pertinent comment on the bovine stupidity of man's even thinking of his own inner nature as giving any hint as to the nature of the universe. The adequate reply was made long ago,—namely that if the ox should reason, not to an ox back of the universe, but to intelligence and will he might not be so far astray. If there are marks of reason in the universe it may be just as well to move a little slowly before pronouncing the universe unfriendly. The scientist assumes that the laws which he discovers in a corner of his laboratory hold good in every corner of the universe. It is true that John Stuart Mill once declared that two and two might make five in some other planet, —but he was careful to locate this possibility in a realm beyond our reach,—and as soon as we could reach such a planet two and two would have to make four, if we were to do any thinking there. No,—the most pessimistic reasoner assumes at least the general trustworthiness of reason,—in other words the friendliness of the universe to reason. The adherent of Judaism or Christianity will no doubt consider this friendliness of the universe

a meager minimum for religious belief,—and so indeed it is,—but for our immediate purpose it is much worth while as pointing toward a warmer and more genial atmosphere than that of contemporary pessimism, in which both religion and science can flourish.

Instead of attempting a task so futile as a definition of religion, I have thus sought to indicate some of its more pressing present-day opportunities and duties. If the human ideals can be realized in higher and finer living through scientific method, through better social institutions, and through the release of nobler spiritual energies in a universe progressively revealing itself as friendly to the highest and best in man, the more detailed religious ideas and practices can be trusted to take care of themselves.

PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN LIFE

PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN LIFE

FREDERICK J. E. WOODBRIDGE

Philosophy and modern life, placed side by side, are a little embarrassing to a philosopher. They suggest that he should say something about both, tell what philosophy is and what modern life, and by confronting them, each with the other, point a moral or adorn a tale. He would gladly take both for granted, confident that he and his hearers will not misunderstand one another. The confidence may be assumed, but it may be justified neither in his case nor theirs. Philosophy may turn out to be his philosophy, that view of life's significance to which his studies and reflections have led him and in terms of which he exhibits his prejudices and pronounces his judgments. My own estimate of modern life would be shared by some, but it would certainly not be shared by others, and this fact warns me that an expression of personal opinions may not be a competent contribution to an occasion like this. Then, too, "modern life" is a label which covers such a multitude of interests that there is no clear definition of the thing

that is so labelled. Life may be qualified by many different adjectives, such as good or bad, noble or base, happy or unhappy, wise or foolish, long or short, which imply some recognized or assumed standard which gives point to the qualifications, but the adjective modern implies the calendar. This makes it very difficult to hit upon an acceptable criterion for distinguishing among the interests of the day those which are modern and those which are not. Such a criterion should involve moral or preferential considerations of which the calendar is obviously innocent. To get at moral or preferential considerations, the adjective modern must be divorced from the calendar and take to itself a quality which is not essentially temporal. We may then speak of modernism as distinct from modern life and find in the former a force which influences action or a spirit which characterizes the attitude of individuals, the spirit of revolt or emancipation. As such it is the property of no particular age. For all times are modern for them that live in them, provoke the contrast between yesterday and tomorrow and put philosophy by their side. A philosopher is, therefore, tempted to drop the adjective and speak of philosophy

and life simply, knowing full well that the presence of the adjective may lead him to beg many questions which he is expected to answer. Freed from the adjective, however, he is free to insist, no matter what his personal philosophy may be, that it is essential for men, if they would really love wisdom, to know themselves, to be clearly conscious of what they want and what they do and to recognize that it is foolish to complain of consequences while still loving and embracing the causes from which those consequences flow. So I have reached a moral sooner than I expected. Modernism is more a matter of sentiment than it is a matter of the calendar. And the recognition of this is not dependent on one's own philosophy. It is a deliverance of history. The parallels in this respect which may be drawn between our own day and the days of others are innumerable; and a philosopher may consequently urge that a generous recognition of the fact is a first step toward sanity of thought and toward the bringing of philosophy to bear on life. The refusal of this recognition is very characteristic of modernism itself and accounts both for its alluring promise of emancipation and for the fear and dread it

arouses in many minds. I have now said all I have to say, but like a musician, would play variations on the theme, repeating and inverting it and letting it seek its affiliations with major and minor chords.

Men of my generation and particularly men of my class who are given to reading books and sometimes writing them, who have the habit of forming opinions and expressing them, and who sometimes reflectingly engage in the work of the world, men of my generation remember a quite different world from the world of today,—a different world in industry, business, society, morals, art, religion, science, democracy, education, and the comforts and conveniences of life. Sometimes they think it was a better world and sometimes not. The matter is one of much popular interest. Comparing today with yesterday is a good topic for conversation and a profitable one for writers. It seems as if the world had never known anything quite like our present civilization. It stands unmatched in many ways of which the plane, flying over the Atlantic with no companion but its driver is the brilliant and stirring symbol. Not the loneliness of it; never was there a more public performance by

a modest and private person. He flew above a watching world, which was eager, hopeful and expectant of success and ready to welcome him with a demonstration. We have fought a war the magnitude of which dwarfs all its predecessors. But are we better off?

Philosophy is expected to answer. That is a heavy responsibility to put upon it. Although philosophy has been called divine and oracles are expected from its groves, its voice, like the newspapers', is a man's voice. The speaker himself may stand in admiration of the spreading wings in the sky or turn away regretting that we fly so fast. Yet philosophers may appeal to philosophy. If they keep their training in mind and are sensible of what others have done before them, it is not likely that they will rush to make a decision. They will ask by what standards are better and worse decided. In what terms do we attempt an appraisement of the movements and interests of the day? One standard they will certainly condemn, that of our own modernity. They will insist that the consciousness of being modern has little to do with moral judgments and that pride in being more modern than other times is an illusion and not an

assurance of excellence. They remember too well the Pharisee's prayer in the story: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers." It is wise to thank God, if we can, for not being these things, to thank him even for not being poor, ugly or unfortunate, for not being stupid and unprogressive, for such thanksgiving is based on a consciousness of human frailty and the tricks of fortune; but it is not well to thank him for not being like others. Taking other men or other times as one's standard is not apt to lead to a clear and critical consciousness of what one is. It does not promote self-knowledge. Life is always modern. We may thank God for that, but we should not thank him for not being like our ancestors. In the matter of better and worse, life proposes for us precisely the same questions it proposed for them. We may answer them differently, but it is not wise to suppose that we in our day are answering them better than they did in theirs. In other words, philosophy would urge that modernism is never a standard of conduct and can never afford one. It is life's impulse, but not life's guide. What is better and what worse, whether it is better to be an extortioner

or not an extortioner, unjust or not unjust, an adulterer or not an adulterer, are questions which can not be answered by an appeal to the modern spirit. Philosophy would not condemn modernism, but if it has anything to say to modern life, it would say, first of all, remember that life is always modern, a fresh start in a stale world. This is a step toward wisdom. Our times are no more modern than was the ancient world or the Middle Age.

They are more complicated and set a faster pace. The ideas which now loom large in the minds of the intelligent and do so much to shape their outlook upon life have shifted. We do not, like Ruth, exclaim: "Thy God shall be my God!" Contempt of the past, confidence in the present and optimism for the future are so wide-spread and prominent, that they are naturally picked out as characteristic. We may be no more modern than our ancestors, but we seem to have made modernism our philosophy more impressively than they ever did. We seem to; I am not sure that we have. The historian has always to remember that he deals with a selected past, one selected by him through his controlling interests or for him through antecedent selections over which

he has no control. The past is dead, leaving for posterity its monuments rather than its life; and the historian is never unlike a traveller who reconstructs a village from the gravestones about an empty church. What a man or a few men find important in their own day may not be found important in other days. The Athenians found it important to put Socrates to death and we, reconstructing the incident from the writings of Plato, wonder, as Xenophon did, by what possible arrangements they could have been persuaded to do such a dreadful thing. The future, not ourselves, will historically decide whether we have done equally dreadful things. The world's martyrs are a selected set of martyrs and its modernists, a selected set of modernists. The forces which control our destiny are rarely the comments which we make upon them. Our exuberant modernism may itself, be only a comment and a contemporaneous comment at that. Students often exclaim: How interesting, that Plato is so modern! I reply: How interesting, that his ideas are so old! I do not say these things as a cynic or a quietist might. My purpose, I hope is a little more worthy. I would neither deny nor slur the belief that

modernism is the hope of a better world. That is precisely what it is. It is the salutary and saving conviction that things are not as they might be and, possibly, as they should be. Bigger and better are both inspiring adjectives. They perpetually need encouragement. They need also a caution and the very caution that a cynic or a quietist might give them, but free from the sneer of the one and the indifference of the other. The caution here is that modernism always involves a selection. It may be bigger and better business, bigger and better babies or even bigger and better folly, It carries in itself no guarantee of excellence. It is a force but not a philosophy, a driver of life and not reflection on life. If, then, we are more modern than men of other times, a philosopher might ask that we define the "more" in terms of our selections, or in terms of the ideas which control us in making them, or in terms of the conversion of a force into a philosophy. To select worldliness instead of godliness may be evidence of the operation of the modern spirit. It is no evidence at all that worldliness is modern while godliness is not. The tomorrows of the future will, doubtless, emulate the tomorrows of the past and reverse

many an antecedent selection. A few years ago we bought mahogany and now we are buying maple. A few years ago we went to church twice on Sunday; we drank whiskey in freedom; we taught Latin, Greek and Mathematics instead of English and Sociology; we went abroad for culture; we went to war. A few years ago the Pilgrim Fathers landed on a stern and rock-bound coast. And New College stands in Oxford with its cornerstone laid only six centuries ago.

Another caution is implied by what has been said. Those who deliberately select and live in the modern spirit are relatively few. I was once told that many million people in this country do not read the *New Republic* or know it exists. The voices of modernists are rarely the voice of the people and still more rarely the voice of God. That may have very little to do with their power. For they are powerful voices, loud, readily distinguishable and easily recognized. They disturb the peace. Once disturbed, peace can not be restored without consideration of the forces which disturbed it. The disturbance which modernism makes in the world is always out of proportion to the number of its professed and con-

scious adherents. Others are often dumb while they are vocal. They force or try to force others to speak, knowing full well that others will then speak on the defensive and show themselves to be conservative or reactionary and not modern. No one likes to be thought conservative or reactionary. A man may boast that what was good enough for his father is good enough for him, but he is boasting and on the defensive. It is a maxim he may live by and would have his children live by, but it is a maxim which convicts him of a lack of confidence and a preference for habitual ease. So modernism naturally claims leadership and usually gets it in the end. Yet it rarely has the following it desires. The followers of conservatives are conservatives who join with their leaders in a common consciousness of what they want and why they want it. Although weak in voice, they are strong in body, have predominant control of ways and means and are not readily dislodged from their position except by violence or the threat of it. The followers of modernists, however, are seldom modernists, for modernism is essentially leadership. To follow in its train is not to hold fast to and conserve something one already

has, but to be stimulated to want or get something one has not. The armies of modernism are consequently difficult to control. Their leaders are hard put to it. They must not only hold the torch high, but they must provide ways and means for new occasions and give some guarantee that what is promised will be given. Their high-mindedness and unselfishness does not beget a following of a similar sort; and when the following gets out of hand, its acts and antics are almost anything besides the display of sense and reason and the modern spirit. That spirit would, above all things, be just and freeing. Its watchword is the emancipation of man. It sets free, however, the forces which are intolerant and which make for uniformity and injustice. It needs the caution that many do not want it and that many who appear to want it and wear the uniform of the modern world, want something else. It is a force and not a philosophy. It may be reminded that the correlative of spirit is flesh and that the emancipation of the spirit is rarely the control of the flesh.

All that I have said may sound like the counsel of perfection, the encouragement to be

modern and the recommendation to be cautious. It is intended to be just that, for that is what philosophy has to say over and over again. Go out for an adventure, but watch your step; and never substitute adventuring for the reflective consideration of what the adventure is. It is always the same—passing the time between one's birth and death. Philosophy has the habit of emphasizing simple and obvious things. It would recall a man to the triviality of his own existence. Let him, in his moments of reflection, calculate what were the chances of his birth and what the likelihood that he will die before he is ready. Let him remember those who were never born and those who are already dead. How easily he might have been among the former and how surely he will be among the latter! Let him remember how little nature cares about him. It looks as if she had tried to contrive him both curiously and admirably, making the manner of his begetting ridiculous and the thing begotten wonderful, prompting him to find shame and ecstasy in the former and egotism and sublimity in the latter. She has been at great pains to produce him, leaving, as it were, a symbol of her labors in the pangs

of child-birth. Yet she has also contrived innumerable ways of destroying him. Death shadows him, whether it is light or dark, until it seems a miracle that he is not taken sooner. Nature seems, however, to support after her own manner whatever he does and to make whatever he does irrevocable. She has provided means which will help him to keep his life going or put an end to it, if he finds them out and their uses, providing, at the same time, that he will begin to live and die without his own assistance, and that all his living and dying is at the expense of others. She lets him do almost anything he wants to or makes him want to do almost anything he will, but has attached to his acts causes and consequences of so varied and troublesome a sort, that his freedom looks like a sham when he reflects and is a peril when he does not. She has made him a king who must perpetually abdicate and seems to warn him that she will eventually do away with him altogether, giving him glimpses of a time when he was not and of a time when he shall be no more.

All this is very trite and obvious, but in the search for truth it is about the truest thing there is, the one fact which stands out unchallenged

amid all our uncertainties, contradictions and controversies. Everything else is uncertain, from the constitution of matter to the nature of the soul. There is immense uncertainty about what human life—or any life—is *for*, and about how it should be lived. There is no uncertainty whatever about what it *is*. This is what philosophy would say to life at all times and in all places. It would say it with emphasis. Harping continually on the obvious and trite, it would hold up to scorn and ridicule every contention that human life is nothing but physics and chemistry, nothing but enzymes, internal secretions and tropisms, nothing but behaviour patterns, nothing but a dream to be psychoanalyzed. Philosophy is quite willing to admit that human life is all these things, but it is never willing to admit that any of them or all of them together define what human life essentially is. Nature has done that without the help of laboratories. She has done it in a manner which makes it forever unnecessary to look for that definition through a microscope or in a test tube. Philosophy would hold up to everlasting ridicule attempts of this latter kind. Life is an adventure which nature has defined and man will

never define it better. All he can do is to adventure as best he can.

What then is better and what worse? Thrown up in this adventure without our consent and out of it with or against our will, who of us will presume to decide? Is it better to ride in automobiles or carriages; to walk or to fly; to expose the body or clothe it; to be sex conscious or sex oblivious; to be radical or conservative; to do away with capital or employ it; to be democratic or aristocratic; to educate the masses or keep them ignorant; to let labor rule or rule it; to remember the poor or forget them; to heal the sick or let them die; to worry about justice or let it take care of itself; to execute Sacco and Vanzetti or let them live; to grant divorces or hold marriage irrevocable; to play golf on Sunday or go to church; to dance the Charleston or the minuet; to expose filth or cover it up; to go to the house of mourning or to the house of joy; to go to college or stay away; to drink or abstain from drinking; to fear God and keep his commandments or not fear him at all? Was the War, or is war, a blessing or a curse? The multitude of possible questions is not so astonishing as the confidence of them that answer them. Phi-

losophy would ask for more attention to this confidence without asking for less attention to the questions. It knows well enough that it can not answer them itself, and so is given to wonder at the readiness and promptitude with which they are answered by many. Again it would advise caution, not in the interest of delay or of doing nothing at all, but in the interest of trying to find out what one is about, of knowing one's own mind, of discriminating what one selects, of heightening one's sense of responsibility and one's readiness to admit and accept the consequences of what one does. For philosophy, although incompetent to decide whether this or that is better or worse, is competent to point out that this or that has inevitable consequences which, if not themselves wanted, ought to have a good deal to do with what a man does and does not want.

What the word philosophy means is, perhaps, a sufficient indication of what it implies. Although, as pointed out long ago, it is difficult for men to *be* wise, they may yet be clear about what wisdom is, and, being clear, incline to the love of it. Wisdom is mastery of the economics of living. The wise man knows the cost of what he does and what he desires

and acts on that knowledge. The foolish man is ignorant of these things and is consequently apt to spend his life in getting what he does not want. Philosophy would, therefore, commend the love of wisdom. It would promote the desire to practise economy in the things of the spirit. It asks men to consider not so much what is right and wrong, good or bad, but what the cost is of the things they want, the interests they support and the practises in which they engage. It is not a stupid utilitarian, finding value only in the good or evil consequences of an act. It is more exacting. It counts as the cost of a thing all that has to be given up if that thing is had. If a man wants liberty and will count the cost, he will find it the most expensive luxury that he can buy, so expensive that many people prefer trying to steal it. Consequently it looks foolish to offer it free or excite others to go and get it. And when sold, it is sold at a fearful cost. Its market needs attention. If a man wants temperance, he can hardly expect to buy it if he creates a market where it is not sold. In doing this, he gives good evidence that he does not want temperance at all, that it isn't worth the price, or that other things are so much

more valuable that it ought not to be sold in competition with them. If he wants peace, he should recognize that promises not to fight are either counterfeit money or notes which imply collateral. And if he examines the collateral, he will find that the cost of peace is almost as high as that of liberty, and that the few who are willing to put up the collateral are the rarest of men and of nations. Philosophy knows only one thing that is better. It is better to count the cost than not to count it. So far as men know what they are doing and have counted the cost, philosophy is quite willing to leave better and worse in the hands of fate.

Instead, therefore, of praising or dispraising our time, of being thankful or regretful that we are not as other times, of contrasting ourselves with the gay nineties or the Victorian age, of pitting the younger generation against the older, of discovering sex to our astonishment, or of advertising the world into salvation, philosophers at least might be more profitably engaged in stimulating a cost-accounting of many of the things we are doing. What, for example, is the cost of buying goods on the installment plan? Thousands of dollars are

just now being spent on the inquiry. It is conducted by economists and financed by a corporation notable for its making and spending of money. The corporation knows what the cost of so selling its own product is in dollars and to the fraction of a cent. It is not paying to find that out or have its own figures verified. It wants to know, if possible, what buying on the installment plan costs a man in terms of his habits, his industry, his choices, his credit, his thrift and his reputation. If it finds out, I do not know and I suppose that it does not now know what it will do with the knowledge. Just now it is admittedly seeking it in justification of its own practise. Yet it has left the inquiry absolutely free in the hands of those who are making it. If it gets the knowledge, it will have thereafter an easy or a troubled conscience. For, although a corporation may be said to have no soul, its members have. They are men as sensible as others of the cloud of mental destiny. They are not bad because they are incorporated any more than others are good for the opposite reason. They are business men whose practise has been challenged. They have been accused of exploiting their purchasers. Instead

of getting righteously indignant they have undertaken to count the cost. I have said that I do not know what they will do with the knowledge if they get it, but I suspect that, if the knowledge goes against them, they will change their practise even if thousands of their purchasers and shareholders are angry. I do not imagine that, in such an event, they will pride themselves on their integrity and morality. That will depend on their egotism. I imagine that they will say simply that big business does not thrive by destroying its customers. They will let others tackle the question whether big business is better or worse.

They will, I imagine, be indifferent or become themselves angry, if those others do not also count the cost.

The illustration may not touch the most important concerns of life. The inquiry may be profitless. The spirit and method of it all are important. They are typical of a good deal that is going on today in a quiet and unobtrusive manner. There are a good many more people in the world than one would guess from our columns and pages of advertising, who, disgusted with flamboyant and noisy appeal to eye and ear, and quite disillusioned,

are industriously counting the cost. A striking example is what serious psychologists are doing. By serious psychologists I mean those who have ceased speculating about the nature of consciousness and the seat of the soul and have turned their attention to something more profitable, like individual ability and adaptability. They would have done much if they had done no more than count the cost of making a child afraid of the dark—a frightful cost for a little gain which could have been had for almost nothing. They are progressively and substantially contributing to the science of human economy.

It would be an agreeable task to set forth with some detail what has already been done in this too-much neglected enterprise. My theme, however, implies a challenge. Philosophy would have us clearly conscious of what we want, sure that we want it, and undeceived about its cost. Current discussions and complaints indicate that there are some things which are bought in large quantities, but are of doubtful value. Among them, strange to say, is education. Perhaps never before has there been so much of it on the market. The demand for it and the cost of it in money are

daily increasing. There is a growing suspicion that much of it is not worth the price. Psychologists, as I have intimated, know this well and are doing what they can to eliminate waste and extravagance. Education is supposed to adapt us to our circumstances and make us better, whatever better may mean. In our uncertainty about its general meaning, there is, surely, wisdom in getting at its meaning in particular, for although it is difficult to define and produce a good man or a good citizen, it is less difficult to define and produce a good mathematician or a good lawyer. If we can not have the former, there is, at least, economy in having the latter. Our education, during the past twenty-five years, has paid increasing attention to this economy and, in spite of all criticism, with increasing success. The best students in our colleges and universities, are as a rule, studying not in order to become good as men, but to become good as something else. Education does not seem to produce "virtue" today any more than it did in Plato's day. It is still true, as the "Meno" points out, that slaves are taught geometry, but the sons of Pericles are not taught virtue. There is the source of the chief and constant

complaint about education. It deserves attention, although it is worth remembering that Socrates found the difficulty to reside in the fact that both those who want virtue, himself included, and those who profess to sell it, do not know what it is. The best he could do, besides exhibiting this ignorance, was to lead Meno's slave to double a square and call attention to the fact that the sons of Pericles had gone to Protagoras. This is decidedly worth remembering, for no philosopher has yet defined virtue satisfactorily or found the means of teaching it effectively; and we can teach geometry and ask Protagoras what he has to say and what it costs to have him say it. He is always with us, professing to teach virtue and make the young better and more intelligent. What then has Protagoras to say and what does he cost? I shall not try to estimate the cost in dollars. It is sufficient to remark that it costs a great deal more in dollars than anything else, ever so much more than geometry, and the exact amount is naturally proportional to the amount of what he says. The cost in dollars is, philosophically, not as important as the cost in something else.

Now what Protagoras has to say is aimed,

not at such things as geometry, but at a much more intangible thing, namely self-improvement as a human being. He wants to improve his pupils rather than the arts and sciences his pupils study. He would stimulate in them a consciousness of themselves and their interests, of what they conceive to be their rights and wrongs and the rights and wrongs of others, of their tastes and preferences, of their likes and dislikes, of their habits of judging and valuing. He would excite them and stimulate them to think. He, consequently, selects for his curriculum subjects which naturally stimulate and excite the effect he would produce. If he has ability, he has success, not however, more success than he ever had in teaching virtue, but success in producing the effect and the kind of pupils at which he aims. He fulfills his promise that by associating with him, his pupils, at least those that follow him, will daily become more conscious that they are becoming better. The promise sounds like a boast but he can modestly appeal to the consciousness and thanks of his pupils for proof that it is not.

What does Protagoras cost? The answer depends on a number of things; who his pupils are, how old they are when they go to him,

what they have studied previously, where they come from, what experience they have had, what their intelligence quotient is, what work they are doing, how they are supported, whether by themselves or others, how disinterested they are—on everything that defines what they are and what they want. A general estimate, therefore, is a very hazardous thing to try to make. Some estimate is called for and called for the more importantly the more Protagoras commands the field of education. I do not doubt that he is worth paying for and paying for handsomely. His product—and I want to be sure of doing justice to his product—is minds awake, active, alert, intelligent and capable. They may be nothing more, nothing more than Protagoras himself repeated. Is that what was wanted? What is it worth? How much was surrendered to get it? Even in such general form, the question should arrest attention. How much is Protagoras worth as a teacher of philosophy if graduate students of philosophy are not interested in it but in something else? How much is he worth as a teacher of economics, if his pupils are not interested in economics? How much is he worth if his teaching transforms interest in history,

social science, psychology, English, chemistry and even mathematics into an interest in something else—into an interest in virtue, even, if you will? Is excitement—student-life excitement, intellectual excitement, social excitement, political excitement, moral excitement, literary excitement, aesthetic excitement, religious excitement—to be paid for at the cost of the advancement of learning? Are the former adequate substitutes for the latter? There are pertinent questions when one surveys education today or is worried over young people and the old people, their leaders, who are exciting them.

We are apt to go about looking for curious and unusual causes for the curious and unusual things we see. There may be such causes. It is very difficult sometimes for an historian not to believe that there is the spirit of an age, that time itself acts, or that human nature in its little understood determinants undergoes some variation or rearrangement which makes it different in its operation and desires. Societies, like individuals, often seem to undergo conversions through a kind of unaccountable hysteria which prompt us to an interest in social and mob psychology. Education, in

spite of belief in it, seems often to account for little and the evidence is that it rarely, if ever, changes original human nature or capacity. A poor speller, for example, at the age of eight may spell better at sixteen, but the chances are he will still be a poor speller, finding that those who were better at eight are also better at sixteen. But just as children in a mining town will play at mining and go a-fishing in a fishing village, so a society will play with the toys of education. Polite conversation is not now seasoned with the classical allusions which once marked it. Its seasoning is of quite a different sort, less delicate and musty, one might say, and more bold and pungent. Educated people are always educated people no matter what education they have received. They are much more than the products of their education, but their education produces products in them and has an immense amount to do with their habits. Characteristic products are to be expected from an education which from the kindergarten to the graduate school is largely controlled by practises and subjects which excite moral and aesthetic rather than intellectual curiosity. Something is to be expected from

an education which sends a boy home from school to ask whether Bacon was sincere, but not to talk about what Bacon said. Something is to be expected from an education which itself expects students, entering college and offering English history for examination, to be qualified after only one year of study as follows:

> "During the first half-year, the periods of the Tudors and the early Stuarts should receive emphasis. Only the briefest reference to the period before 1066 need be made, and from the Norman Conquest to the accession to the Tudors the treatment should be topical rather than exhaustive. It should deal with the effects of the Norman Conquest, relations with France, Scotland, and Ireland, Magna Charta and the origins of Parliament, and the emergence of parliamentary government out of the feudal monarchy. Some attempt also should be made to explain the development and character of the Christian Church in England, its relations with the papacy, the severance of these relations, the establishment of the national church, and the Puritan movement.
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> In the second half-year, starting with the Restoration, attention should be given first to the continued struggle between

Crown and Parliament, culminating in the establishment of responsible government. In studying the great wars with France, attention should be directed to the commercial and colonial expansion in America and the East. With regard to imperial policy, the causes and effects of the Scottish and Irish unions and the revolt of the American colonies should be explained. The study of the revolution in agriculture, industry, and transporatation should include some consideration of the consequent political and social reforms. Since the Reform Act of 1867, emphasis should be laid upon the more important reforms affecting economic, political, and social life, and upon the problem of Ireland. Some idea should be given of the growth and nature of the British power in the Colonies and the Problem of imperial organization.

In general, it is desirable to emphasize the important epochs and movements rather than the reigns of the monarchs; to trace developments; to secure a clear comprehension of the more influential personalities; and to show the relations of English history to the history of other countries, especially the United States."

That is a good deal for a boy or girl to learn before entering college and learn in one year

while stimulated to do much else. One wonders if one year is sufficient for the problem of Ireland alone. One wonders what the cost of our education is in other things—respect for truth, disinterested inquiry, intellectual sympathy, liberality and matured judgment —an education which, beginning in our schools and running on into our graduate schools has been controlled predominantly in subject matter and almost wholly in spirit, by the study of English and what we call the social sciences, and an education dominated in its teaching by methods which stimulate self-consciousness, self-expression, introspection, moral and aesthetic judgments, and the early formation of opinions, with a consequent heavy drain on the nerves of both teacher and taught.

I do not raise the question whether an exciting education is better than one which is not exciting. I would raise the question of the cost in human economy; and I would suggest that we ought not be surprised that many people, both old and young, are restless, bewildered, extravagant, opinionated, and irresponsible. We ought not to be surprised that psychological tests are as good a test of fitness to enter college as subject-matter exam-

inations. And we ought not to delude ourselves by concluding that this well-established fact is a commentary on secondary education and not also a commentary on what college education is. An exceptionally brilliant young student of economics, now a professor of that subject, presented himself for examination as a candidate for the doctor's degree. One of the examiners, noted for his liberal views, asked the student questions about the economic theories of a bygone age. The student replied: "I don't take any stock in those theories." The examiner replied: "But you are expected to know what the theories are in which you take no stock." There are a great many intelligent people in the world who do not know what it is in which they take no stock. There are a great many teachers who do not know. Into what then are we investing the funds of human nature? The dividends are what the investment pays. So philosophy and modern life, placed side by side, are philosophy and life placed side by side—a challenge and not a judgment. Philosophy is self-knowledge; or, to paraphrase Santayana, clearly to discern what one means and what one loves. To do this clearly requires

much more than confident opinion. For life is an adventure, a speculation. It yields a profit in one way at a cost in another way. He who knows his own mind, ought not to be surprised at what he buys.

THE SOCIAL ORDER AND MODERN LIFE

THE SOCIAL ORDER AND MODERN LIFE

ROSCOE POUND

Much alarm is expressed in many quarters, and there is more than the usual concern about professorial heresy and fear of dangerous freedom of thought and teaching in our colleges, because of the contrast between the need of creative thought in the social sciences today and the need of stabilizing and reconciling and systematizing thought in the era that followed the Civil War. Indeed we might well compare the present with the period after the Revolution. That was a time of transition from a colonial to a national polity. It was an era of expansion. Old institutions had to be reshaped and new ones had to be devised not merely for a new nation in a new world, but for a series of new pioneer commonwealths in the successive waves of settlement across the continent. Hence it was an era of creative energy, in politics, in law, in every phase of social activity. Men were zealous to remake and reshape, to determine what of our inherited law and inherited institutions were

applicable to American life and what not, and had confidence in their power to do these things wisely and well. True there were those who feared this process of remaking and reshaping. The Federalists were fearful of democracy. They prophesied that the social order would be shaken unless an aristocracy was preserved. They, or many of them, could not conceive of an orderly society in which men could live in security unless there were distinctions and titles and decorations, such as had gone along with politically organized society in the old world for centuries. They anticipated the direst results from the overhauling of traditional English institutions and modification of traditional English habits of political thought and political action, which were made inevitable by the geographical and social conditions of a new world. Surely when we read the extravagant speeches and pamphlets and editorials of the Federalists at the end of the eighteenth century, we may meet the problems of another period of transition with a lighter heart.

After the Reform Bill and rise of liberalism in England, after the events of 1848 and establishment of parliamentary institutions on

the Continent, and after the Civil War in America, the creative impetus had spent itself and a season of ordering and systematizing made the nineteenth century, as we look back upon it in comparison with the creative era, seem relatively and typically a time of standing still. Men thought of it as a time of reconstruction rather than of construction. It was supposed that after the French Revolution and the rise of democracy rebuilding was in order. There had been a series of revolutions. The Reformation, the Protestant Revolution, the Revolution of 1688, the American Revolution and the French Revolution had done away with the relationally organized society of the Middle Ages with its partition of authority between religious and political organization. It remained to perfect the details of the institutions which had grown up or had been set up to meet the needs of a society of freely competing individual economic units.

Today there is once more a call for creative energy. Again there is a stage of transition. The census of 1920 showed that the center of gravity of the population had just definitely shifted from the rural to the urban community. Conditions of life have changed widely and

definitely within a generation. There has been an economic unification through the Federal reserve system, a unification through easy means of travel and widespread habits of continual travel from one end of the land to the the other; a unification through almost instantaneous and complete diffusion of news throughout the whole country by telegraph, newspaper, and radio; a unification through making of our garments, our food, our implements, our vehicles in manufacturing centers and diffusion by organized country-wide agencies; a unification through national trade, professional, business and vocational organizations; a unification through the mobilization of five millions of our youth in an army on a national basis, in contrast with the state regiments of all our prior wars. Thus there is a steady and rapid change toward unification, with legal and political institutions, which presuppose a very different social order, in a process of transition on its heels. As in the formative era of our institutions, we must rethink, remake, reshape. Except as an act of omnipotence, creation is not the making of something out of nothing. It is the fashioning or refashioning of given materials to new

purposes. We have to use the materials of the law and politics of the nineteenth century in the same creative spirit in which the founders of our polity used the materials of the English law and politics of the seventeenth century. Naturally there is the same friction between creative thought and inquiry on the one hand, and fear for the social order on the other hand, which was so marked at the time of the rise of Jeffersonian democracy.

Under the stress of such a transition there is active inquiry into and even challenge of every feature of the social order. Equally, as in every other period of transition, there is anxious fear of the consequences of such inquiry and deprecation of such challenge. But man has inquired into and challenged his natural and his social environment from the beginning. Adam ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Prometheus stole fire from heaven and brought it down to earth for man's use. Pandora opened the box out of curiosity. Every social and political and economic order man has known has been scrutinized or criticised or even defied by those who in all times have felt strongly the hurt to life which goes with any enforced organization. They have

felt that life as such is free, individual, varied. Yet living things can only maintain themselves by accumulated experience of how to control their surroundings in some measure. They can only inherit the earth by organized co-operation whereby they become unfree, standardized, alike. Rousseau's man who divested himself of civilization and returned to nature, was a protest against the formal over-refinement of eighteenth-century society. He would have been the first victim of nature had a concrete human being attempted to realize that ideal.

When told of Margaret Fuller's dictum, "I accept the universe," Carlyle's comment was, "Egad, she'd better." Living things must accept their environment. Yet life does not of necessity accept its environment in a purely passive fashion. It seeks to control the environment so as to make adjustment thereto in some sort involve mastery over it. As Ward puts it, our attitude toward nature is twofold. It is that of a student, but it is also that of a master. Man cannot prevent earthquakes or eruptions or tornados or floods or droughts or fires. But he can plan and build and organize so as to minimize their effects.

His life involves continual striving to exercise over all natural forces and natural phenomena a measure of direction and control such as to protect from hurt and extort from nature all that may be toward the satisfaction of human desires.

Life is a process of adjustment and adaptation to environment. Very likely it is not possible to reach a degree of adaptation in which there shall be no friction. There is continual struggle of every organism with adverse surroundings. As Ward puts it, it is "this grinding at the outer borders of its sphere of activity" which keeps down the number of most species of living things to moderate limits and holds most of them to definite geographical areas. In the case of most organisms there is a huge waste of life because the degree of adaptation is so imperfect that enormous numbers must be produced in order that some survive. Man has succeeded best in reducing this ratio of production to survival. But to do so man has to learn to adapt to human as well as to physical environment. He has had to learn to adjust to internal as well as to external nature. The mastery over nature which he seeks is twofold. There must be

mastery over his physical surroundings. There must be also mastery over human—we must not say instincts nowadays—predispositions or behavior tendencies or what you will which make up what our fathers used to call human nature.

Man has done great things toward the mastery of his physical environment, not the least within the present generation. Whether control over internal or human nature has kept pace with this increased mastery of external nature has been much mooted. Those who work in the physical and biological sciences seem more hopeful on this point than those whose work is in the social sciences. A leader of modern physical science expects to control human nature through control of physical nature. He says:

"With all our mastery over the powers of nature, we have adhered to the view that the struggle for existence is a permanent and necessary condition of life. Today it appears as though it may well be but a passing phase, to be altogether abolished in the future, as it has to some extent been mitigated in the past, by the unceasing and as it now appears unlimited ascent of man to knowledge and

through knowledge to physical power and dominion over nature."

Whether wants and desires do not increase in proportion with this mastery over external nature and thus make the problem of control of internal nature increasingly difficult, I must leave to the economists and sociologists. At any rate we start in all social questions with this raising of human powers to their highest possible unfolding—this quest for a maximum control over nature, both physical nature and human nature, toward human ends. Through it man has been able to inherit the earth and to preserve and increase his inheritance.

In the social order, then, we have a means toward the adjustment which is involved in or presupposed by life. It is a means. The end is nothing less than the progressive development of human powers to their highest point; the utmost completeness of adjustment to environment, the most thorough going mastery of nature which are possible under the limitations of human constitution and the constitution of the physical universe. Thus there must be adaptation of the social order to life in general as well as adaptation of particular lives to the social order. But the essence

of life is change. The social order in adapting to life must change and does change. Yet the institutions of the social order are not unlikely to be thought ends. Instead of furthering the purposes of the social order they may come to hinder them. Our forbears were acutely aware of this. When at the Reformation, the authoritarian regime of the Middle Ages broke down, the atomistic tendencies of rationalism, private interpretation, and exaltation of the claims of the individual were met by the dogma of passive obedience to rulers. This had been the rallying cry of the defeated party in the English and later in the American Revolution. Not unnaturally the founders of our polity argued for a right of revolution. James Wilson, one of the framers of the federal constitution and justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, develops this theory at great length, in an introduction to the study of law. Indeed our Bills of Rights preserve the memory of this idea, so foreign to our conceptions of today, in the obsolete guarantee of the right of the individual citizen to bear arms. A right of revolution and an individual right of every one to carry weapons and train himself in the use of them, as guaran-

tees of a sound functioning of the social order, are so out of line with the conditions of life as they have come to be, that they have disappeared from our books and many of those who cry out loudest about the modes of thought of the fathers are shocked when this, one of the most characteristic of their modes of thought is even mentioned. Judge Cooley in 1868, Mr. Justice Miller in 1891 and Professor Willoughby in 1910 each dismisses in a brief and jejune paragraph what had seemed to Mr. Justice Wilson in 1791 to require labored exposition and to deserve being "taught as a principle of the Constitution of the United States and of every State in the Union." Indeed in 1834 it was argued in the Supreme Court of South Carolina as an undoubted natural and garanteed right. So do our conceptions of the fundamentals of the social order change with the changes in life.

All social life calls for some regimentation of conduct. It even calls for some community of belief. Individual men who are to live together in civilized society must at least believe in social life and in some social order, even if theoretically in no more than an ideal of a Christian governed by the Scriptures and

the spirit or of a reasonable man governed only by his conscience. There is a social need of a body of common beliefs, such as is given by tradition. There is need to find the bounds in which common and accepted beliefs are to function and those in which the human spirit is to be left free to seek newer and better means of adaptation. The social order is both a product of the civilization of the past and a product of attempts to adjust this expression of past civilization to the civilization of the present. Thus there is an element of stability and an element of change. It is an ordering, but it is an ordering of life. It organizes conduct, but each item of conduct is to some extent unique. When life is quiescent, when men for a time have settled down to a humdrum routine of existence and new desires are not pressing or new ideas bearing fruit in further conquests of nature, the details of the social order may appear as things to stand fast forever. When life is active, when men are seeking new channels for their energies, when new desires are pressing and new agencies of nature are being harnessed to man's use, every detail may seem shaken and the whole fabric

may seem threatened—and yet civilization may endure and go forward.

Let us look at the life of today in comparison with the life of yesterday. "Modern" is a relative term. It may include life from the breakdown of the relational society of the Middle Ages or from the democratic movement of the end of the eighteenth century or from the social legislation of the end of the nineteenth century, or from the mechanical organization of industry and shifting from the rural to the urban which mark the present century. Where I live, any place beyond Albany is "west." But I have heard a story of a resident of Seattle after the fire of 1890 who announced that he was going to give up and go back "east," and when called on to specify said he was returning to Idaho. "Modern life" admits of quite as much latitude of choice as "east" and "west". But the "modern life" which gives concern to those who must study the relations of institutions to the social order and of both to life, is the unified, machine dominated, specialized, crowded life under the eyes of one's fellow men, which goes on in the urban community of today. Compare

with this the pioneer, rural, agricultural life of, say, a century ago.

As things were, life centered in a small, clearly defined group; the household or the neighborhood. In some such group, we might almost say, the individual lived and moved and had his being. Transportation was slow, inconvenient and expensive. Men had few contacts without—and those chiefly political. Moreover these groups were homogeneous. The members understood each other and the group understood other like groups. Also they were independent. Emphatically they were independent economically. Each pioneer, each rural household raised its own food, butchered its own beef, killed its own hogs, smoked its hams and bacon and barreled its salt pork, cut fuel from its own wood lot. Each housewife made the family clothes, made bread, churned butter, spun wool and flax, made soap. If it needed ice, it cut ice from its own pond. Each household rural and urban drew water from its own well or its own spring. Each neighborhood grew and ground its own grain, made its own vehicles, was a self-sufficient economic entity. Often it was all but independent politically. There was a

certain degree of unification for purposes of protection, and the commerce clause of the federal constitution testifies to a rising need of some economic unification. But the provision as to local militia in our bills of rights show how jealous those self-sufficient neighborhoods were of centralized military protection; how much they feared it might get out of hand and lead to something more than was needed for the common defence against alien enemies. Likewise both the household and the neighborhood was a versatile group, or better a group marked by individual versatility. There was very little specialization. Each household, or at least each neighborhood had to find within itself those equal to every emergency, those competent to do all things required by the existence or the functioning of the group. Above all, each group was a free group in the sense that each grown individual, and the pioneer matured early, was free to withdraw and seek more congenial associations, physical or human. Any one who chafed under the small degree of social control required for the pioneer, rural community, could go into the wilderness and make him a new home.

In such a society the doctrine of consocia-

tion rather than subordination, the conception that we are with one another rather than over one another, the ideal of a maximum of free individual self-assertion, the regime of every one standing on his own bottom and looking out for himself expressed the civilization of the time and place as completely as they fail to express the civilization of today.

In American society today there are huge, more or less indefinite groups. The household is a loose group. Truancy and incorrigibility are not a matter for interview between father and son in the family woodshed but are in the jurisdiction of juvenile courts. More and more the household has ceased to be an economic unit even in legal theory—and legal theory is always the last thing to change. The books now discuss, not defense of a member of one's household, but defense of a guest riding in his automobile. Nor is the neighborhood longer a solid, self-sufficient group. Dwellers in the same apartment house no longer know each other or have any interests in common unless sometimes to hold a miserly landlord to the minimum of fair treatment which they can extort from him with the aid of a housing commission or a board of health.

The vital interests of the individual are no longer necessarily in the geographical area in which he chances to sleep nights. His economic life may be in Manhattan, yet our political organization may assign him to New Jersey or Connecticut. Thus in the life of today there may be ill adjustment of our municipal institutions, framed for the old-time village neighborhood or large town of local neighborhoods.

Where the political group of the past was homogeneous and natural, today it is likely to be heterogeneous and artificial. Compare the colony of the Revolutionary period with the state of today. Especially in the west, the state boundaries are often arbitrary lines upon the map. One portion of a political unit may be tributary economically to a center in one state and another to a different center in a third state; or the whole area may be dependent on some great center out of the state. When we perceive that a sales agent politically in California may be economically dependent on Detroit or Flint in Michigan—may owe economic allegiance to Michigan and political allegiance to California—we may understand better why politics mean much less to the city

dweller of today than they meant to the pioneer. For in the political group men are now dependent and interdependent in every sort of extra group combination. Nor are localities self-sufficient or self sustaining. In the agricultural community in Maine, in which I live in the summer, you buy at the country store corned beef canned in Argentina by a Chicago corporation, ham and bacon come from Chicago, and milk is supplied to Boston. For clothing one orders from mail order houses in New York or Philadelphia, remits through the post-office and receives his purchase through the parcel post. Bread is made in another state and comes to a local distributor by express. In the urban community which is my political and legal situs, fuel comes from Pennsylvania, if coal, or Texas, if oil, and we are at the mercy of labor troubles in jurisdictions in which our interests do not come into consideration. Our water supply comes from the head waters of an interstate river and varied interstate questions in its inception. Ice, which has become a necessity, comes from another state. We do not grow our own grain, make our own vehicles, or even raise our own fruit and vegetables within the territory of which politically

we are a part. One may see on a spur track in California freight cars loading with lettuce for the tables in New York and Boston. Even our crimes and criminals are no longer necessarily domestic. The automobile has made robbery and banditry interstate, and the quick and easy means of transportation and crowded business centers into which a great population pours each morning, to pour out again each evening, make country-wide organization of crime as feasible and inevitable as country-wide organization of industry.

One hundred and fifty years ago it took Washington twelve days to ride from Philadelphia to Cambridge in an emergency. Today any traveler can make that journey in eight hours. When General Grant went to West Point from Ohio as a cadet in 1839, it took nine days of travel by river boat, canal, and rail. Today he could go by sail from Los Angeles to West Point in half of that time. When General Sherman went from New Orleans to San Francisco in 1850, it took six weeks to go by boat and the Isthmus of Panama, the quickest route, whereas one may go now in less than half as many days. Indeed men have gone from New York to San

Francisco by automobile in half as many days, and New York and Boston are but two days from San Francisco or Los Angeles by air mail. Transportation and communication have made of the land one vast overgrown heterogeneous neighborhood. Compare the modern automobile factory with sales agencies in every locality with the old local carriage factory making for and selling to its own immediate neighborhood. Compare the old local store with the chain stores; the local inn with the chain hotels, with a peripatetic staff, working as like as not in New England in the summer and in Florida in the winter. When spring and autumn see an annual migration in automobiles so that New England is the summer playground and Florida the winter playground of a whole people, state lines lose any but political significance.

Now this change from the life of the time for which our institutions were devised affects the working of those institutions, is brought out as one studies American criminal justice in action. The different agencies of criminal justice, organized for a land of distinct, economically independent, self-sufficient localities, still function as if we were such a land today.

Acting independently, they continually hinder or thwart each other, or, if by good luck there is no interference, at best lend each other little or no aid. Each state, each county, each municipality, each court, each prosecutor, each police organization—and often more than one are operating concurrently in the same territory—is likely to go its independent course, with little or no regard for what the other is doing. It may even happen that state and federal prosecuting agencies or judicial officers may cross each other's paths and interfere with each other's operations. The well known case of Dodge, wanted in New York for perjury but fled to Texas, is an extreme but characteristic example. Before he could be taken back to New York, there were four writs of habeas corpus, there was a conflict of jurisdiction between state and federal officials, there were four extradition warrants, one injunction, one appeal, and one contempt proceeding. Even then it was necessary for a masterful detective to take the bull by the horns and put the fugitive into the hands of justice by an extra-legal coup. The unification which has taken the romance out of robbery and given us organized mass production

of wrongdoing, demands a co-operation in administration and in the whole machinery of criminal justice which is foreign to the spirit of our institutions.

Moreover, the highly specialized life of today is out of touch with the spirit of institutions that presuppose pioneer versatility. The disappearance of the wilderness and the obsolescence of the frontier are out of touch with the spirit of a polity which presupposes an individual power of withdrawal and a wide domain into which he may venture as a pioneer to begin anew.

Civilized life is made possible by the realizing of reasonable expectations. What I may expect my fellow man to do in civilized society are my rights. What my fellows may expect me to do are my duties. The relationally organized society of the Middle Ages stressed what was expected of men in relations. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries stressed exemption of men, living in a competitive, economically organized society, from the burden of the expectations of their fellow men beyond security against aggression and a minimum maintenance of the general health, safety, and morals. Thus in the nineteenth

century we had our eyes fixed upon rights. Indeed our bills of rights go further. They are not so much bills of rights as bills of liberties. They are more an enumeration of guaranteed conditions of non-restraint of men's natural powers than of authoritatively declared and secured expectations. They are not so much statements of what each may expect as of what his neighbor must not expect. As such they belong to the life of the past, when there was little division of labor, little interdependence, little in the way of unified nation-wide economic life to create many or complex expectations. We may yet see Bills of Duties alongside our classical Bills of Rights.

But it is not merely that our organized, as one might say, our official, social and political institutions are made for one type of life while we are living another. We have abundance of unofficial, nascent, hardly recognized institutions growing up to do the work of a social order in process of adaptation to modern life. What is most significant and most difficult is to adapt our modes of thought, our mental pictures of the social order as it should be, to the exigencies of the life we are constrained to live. For these mental pictures of the

social order as we should like it to be are decisive factors in all that we do. There can be no costlier source of friction than a want of adaptation of our inherited or traditional ideals to the conditions in which we seek to make them real.

Let us use a more concrete word. In their origin "idea" and "ideal" mean "picture." Let us say "picture". Let us say that in what we do individually and collectively we are guided, sometimes consciously and many times or in large part unconsciously, by a mental picture, more or less definite, of things as it seems to us they ought to be.

Take a case which the philosophers have put from antiquity. The oldtime smith has his tools and a piece of steel. Also he has in his mind the picture of a saw. He applies his tools to the steel and fashions the steel to the picture. Thus the picture is made real in the completed saw. But we have had a more striking example in the present generation. Icarus had in his mind a picture of a man flying. The Sun melted his wings of wax and feathers and he came to grief, as many aviators have done since. Yet the picture has remained and has urged men and

guided their efforts until today it has become a reality in aerial navigation.

On every side of human activity these pictures enter into all that we do. Look, for example, at what we are pleased to call the facts of history. Chiefly we know them through narratives of actors and witnesses. These narratives are not and cannot be photographic or phonographic records of the exact details of all the occurrences of the past. There has to be interpretation, selection, sequence and development, and the narrator or witness is governed in these things by his mental picture of things as they should be. Thucydides is the first and perhaps the greatest of those who have weighed and sifted evidence and striven to make their narrative conform to a picture of a history which should be an exact record of things as they were and as they happened. Yet it appears that Thucydides had another picture in his mind which gave shape to his conception of what was and what happened. Perhaps unconsciously, he thought of a world governed by the sequence of rise, prosperity, arrogance and fall, as portrayed by the Greek tragedians. He assumed this sequence in his inquiries. He had this picture

of human life before him as he interpreted, selected, arranged and developed his materials. Naturally he so wrote history as to make it set forth that sequence. Indeed, it is now well recognized that history writing involves a selection of topics and materials, a choice of what is to be held relevant or important and what not, a judgment and an interpretation, in which the picture in the mind of the historian is decisive. He cannot go on an assumption that all facts were created free and equal and endowed with an inalienable right to appear in his pages in all their multifariousness and original nakedness. He goes rather on an assumption that some are significant and some are not and this significance is determined by his picture of what a history should tell and to what end.

Thus in an age when a great people, whose best energies had been given to religious development, found their religious institutions torn down and their worship proscribed, the Book of Daniel gave us the first religious interpretation of history. In an age when another great people had been pioneers in the development of free political institutions and had emerged from a long struggle in which

those institutions had prevailed and taken form and were being copied the world over, English historians gave us political interpretations of history. Indeed Grote, in the great days of English liberalism, wrote the history of Athens in terms of the liberal movement of the middle of the last century. And nowadays, in an age in which industry is the conspicuous human activity, we find historians giving all things an economic interpretation, looking at history upon an economic background, and thinking of it as a record of human strivings to satisfy economic wants. When statesmen, members of a leisure class, contending for political power, were the conspicuous figures in English life, Athenian history was interpreted in terms of statesmen and demagogues. Today, when the labor party in England has brought a new type of political leader before our eyes, we find English writers, with a different mental picture giving direction to their thoughts, telling Athenian history as a record of an attempt by working-men to use political power in order to maintain their standard of living.

One may make the point even better in my own immediate field of the law. Not the least

element in the everyday administration of justice is a body of more or less definite ideals of the social order and of the end or purpose of law, and hence of what legal institutions and doctrines and precepts ought to be and ought to achieve. In the aggregate they make up a picture in the minds of judges to which decisions tend to conform, by which precepts are interpreted and applied, and doctrines are given content, and developed or limited. But not all the details of this picture are received, authoritatively established ideals which may be said to form a part of the law of the land. Our Anglo-American legal theory does not admit any place for ideals, and so it is common to confuse subjective ideals of the particular judge and received ideals which are an element in the law. When a judge has to decide what is "reasonable," as he has to do so often, he turns to his picture of things as they should be. What accords with this picture is reasonable. But the law does not give him the details of this picture, nor even in many cases, its outlines. As Mark Twain said of the judgment of Solomon, it all lies in the way Solomon was raised. Hence dissents and judicial disagreements are as common in cases calling for

a judgment of what is reasonable as they are rare in cases calling for application of a definite rule of law. The difficulty is in treating the administration of justice as though it had no ideal element, so that when that element must come into play it comes in more or less unconsciously, and so without critical discrimination between the ideals which are those of the social order and the ideals which are those of the particular magistrate. The judge is not unlikely to use his individual picture of what ought to be as if it were an absolute measure like a rule of property.

For example, in old decisions before the Fourteenth Amendment, which are not now controversial, we find judges saying that legislation which "violates the social compact" is void, without regard to any specific constitutional provision. We find them laying down that things inconsistent with institutions of free government are to be held void by judicial pronouncement without reference to any particular constitutional prohibition. Also we find them deducing from the "social compact" as if it were as definite a document and as knowable in its details as the Statute of Wills. Thus in effect the judge's picture of an

ideal American Commonwealth and ideal American society became a super-constitution to which all lawmaking must conform.

Ample illustration of this ideal super-constitution in action may be found in the law books in old cases to which present controversial ideas do not attach. For example, in the Dred Scott case, we see a judge from south of Mason and Dixon's line and one from the north reaching with absolute assurance diametrically opposite results by means of what each assumes to be inevitable logical deduction from the same instrument treated by the same legal technique. During the Civil War we find the judges in one of the leading states of the Confederacy laying down that a statute is void if it infringes upon "States' Rights", even if no specific constitutional provision is infringed. The picture of an ideal political order, which served in the minds of the judges for a super-constitution was the real measure of decision. Again not quite seventy-five years ago the judges of the highest court of New York reached the conclusion that a prohibitory law was not due process of law upon the basis of the very constitutional text which, a few years since, afforded no obstacles when

like statutory provisions came before the courts. The constitutions and the statutes were the same. But the pictures of what ought to be in the minds of the judges had changed completely.

What must give us most concern, therefore, is not the warping of institutions and constitutional provisions and statutes as the social order and its political and legal institutions adjust to modern life. In a long view what is likely to prove hardest and to retard and make ineffective our efforts at adjustment will be not stubborn facts but stubborn theories. Nor will it be the theories of impractical men—of teachers and writers and thinkers. Much more it will be the dogmas of the practical man, who assumes that his picture of what ought to be, made on a background of the idealized life of his formative years, out of the limited experience of his narrow life, is an accurate picture of what is and a measure of what must be. Dickens knew this man and portrayed him in Mr. Podsnap. Mr. Podsnap had done well in the insurance business and was prosperous. His life consisted in rising at eight, shaving close at a quarter past, breakfast at nine, going to the city at ten, returning

at five, and dining at seven. All things were to be fitted to this life. Nothing that did not conform thereto was to be permitted. Whatever was incompatible with this scheme of things was wrong and was to be eliminated. When any such thing was even suggested, Mr. Podsnap magnificently put it behind him with a backward sweep of his hand and pronounced the decisive judgment—"not English."

Not the least effective of the agencies to which we must look for adapting the social order to modern life are those which may be brought to bear upon our pictures of the social order and of life as they ought to be. And here, I take it, is the relevance of our topic to the occasion we celebrate. For education has to do with these pictures directly and immediately. It seeks directly and immediately to lead us to inquire into these pictures, both in their details and as wholes. It leads us to see whence they come, how they got their form and content, how they compare with those of men in the past and with those of our neighbors in the present. More far reaching, it affects these pictures indirectly by leading to unconscious criticism. It makes us aware of other possibilities. It makes us less

absolute and dogmatically assured. It gives breadth and depth to the experience which, with the traditions received in our youth, furnishes the material of these pictures. It makes us conscious that the pictures which sufficed for our grandfathers or our fathers may need retouching or redrawing now that huge metropolitan areas have sprung up where less than a century ago were swamps or Indian missions or frontier outposts. Most of all it makes us cautious about attempts to make things over out of whole cloth and over night to the pattern of uncriticised conceptions of what ought to be. It mediates between the need of stability and the need of change. It gives us pause when we are moved to commit institutional waste. It warns us when we would ignore the exigencies of life and expect the details of the social or political or legal order of the time and place to stand fast forever.

In Aristotle's phrase, through organized education we make for furtherance of reason and the will of God—and what else is civilization; what else is the end of the social order?

ART AND MODERN LIFE

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LORADO TAFT

One of our wise men has written, "Art is the Ark of the Covenant in which all ideals of beauty and excellence are carried before the race." It is because I heartily believe this that I am here today.

Throughout the ages there have been men who delighted in whittling, in drawing and painting. They decorated their bodies, their homes and their shrines. Now and then one of these craftsmen had a vision of something more wonderful or more beautiful than anything he had known before—an ideal which he felt must be preserved and shared with others. He may have glimpsed the mystery of the "burning bush" or dreamed of "angels ascending and descending." Perhaps an inexplicable joy has thrilled him; perhaps an overpowering awe. In any case it is something vastly important to him; something which compels him to make in enduring material a record of his experience. Studying these emotional expressions of other days one is constantly impressed by their earnestness, their naively passionate

appeal, at times as poignant and inarticulate as the moans of an affectionate household pet. Along with the prophets of Israel and the world's real poets, these nameless toilers of the centuries came closest, it seems to me, to a fulfillment of Nietzsche's high ideal, "Life means for us constantly to transform into life and flame all that we are and meet with."

Is there anyone in my audience who can tell me, offhand, what we are on earth for? I am always hoping that some person may rise in response to my question, and answer the "Riddle of the Universe." But no, the men of thought who have preceded me on this program have openly proclaimed their uncertainty. I have asked high-schools—the wisest of all assemblages—but they were wiser by far than I had dreamed; they did not know, and knew that they did not! When I was a boy it was quite otherwise; the catechism told us all about it. But today even the preachers acknowledge their ignorance. There is progress all along the line! Baffled on every hand, we recognize that we come out of mystery and that we depart into mystery; we have no notion what it is all about. The whole game would be a ghastly farce were it not for

the assurance felt by most of us that we are making progress. Progress—in what direction? To me the most obvious token is in these records of the ages; the appreciable gain in the world's spiritual wealth. Through poetry and painting and sculpture, life begins to explain itself. The thing most precious, the highest ideal, man has always embodied in the form of art and transmitted with his love to those coming after. Hence it is that little lands which all together would not fill one of our states, countries like Greece or Palestine, loom large in the past. They have bequeathed to us their treasures, while other enormous territories are forgotten because they did nothing for us. Yes, these little countries created, and we have "entered into their labors."

Aside from their intrinsic worth these precious things have another value for us, a message particularly needed in America; they help us to realize the infinite sequence of life. As a nation we have little accumulated wisdom and slight appreciation of the gifts of the ages. Our life is casual, without background. Our homes seem to be on casters, like our furniture,—every moving, ever changing. Our

recreations are hectic—at forty or fifty miles an hour. Our music is jazz; our drama, the movie; our literature, the strident daily. To the other arts we are practically immune. If only we could pause long enough to read the message of the centuries! If our people would but listen to the invitation; "The eternal court is open unto you with its society, wide as the world, multitudinous as its days, the chosen and the mighty of every time and place." What a companionship is offered us! Here is my confession of faith. I hold that as intelligent people we have a right to: (1) all of the beauty around us, the beauty of nature which most of us never perceive; (2) all of the inheritance of the past, of which Americans are particularly unconscious; and (3) to the talent which springs up perennially, but which America's rushing life is wont to extinguish before it takes root.

In the presence of so scholarly an audience we should perhaps begin with a definition of Art. We have no time for this; there are a thousand of them; every writer has his own. Most of them include the word "Beauty", and manifestly we should seek a definition likewise of this word. Manifestly too, we shall

do nothing of the sort, for here we should find at least ten thousand. Every individual has his own, formulated or otherwise. As the French wittily mangle a familiar phrase: "Chacun a son mauvais gout!" No creative artist ever troubles himself over definitions: these are for the parasites of art. So leaving all of these preliminaries for a later and wiser day we may attempt to define by means of comparison. My predecessors at this desk have gone far afield for their illustrations. Let us turn for a few minutes to recognized periods of artistic activity; then, if time permit, come down to our allotted subject!

You will readily agree that the Greeks were an artistic people and the fifth century B. C. a time of marvelous productivity. How did it happen? Professor Taine used to tell us in my old Beaux-Arts days that the Greeks were active and alert because of their climate and the physical conformation of their country; that their mountain ranges, criss-crossing the land, separating the people into little communities, had endowed them with independence and courage; that these same ranges projecting like fingers into the sea and then, forming a path of island stepping-stones to

Asia Minor, encouraged them to become navigators and adventurers. The dear old cross-eyed professor spun out his theories in beautiful French, captivating and utterly convincing. Today one questions. I stood recently amid the ruins of old-time Corinth. Beneath me was an immense pit dug by our American School of Classical Studies and revealing a score of stratifications of other centuries, layers of broken urns and debris alternating with strata of dirt. A few feet below me I saw protruding a slab of marble exquisitely decorated with the well-known honeysuckle ornament; a bit of carving so delicate that I am sure no Greek of today could copy it, much less design its equal. I coveted that radiant bit of marble. As I looked a lizard darted across its ivory surface and crept into a hole.

The next day we were again in Athens and on the slope of the Acropolis I saw the huts of the modern Athenians. A motley crowd swarmed forth and stared at us, but toward violet-crowned Athens' chief diadem they did not even lift their unseeing eyes. Back like the lizards they crept into their holes. The sky is still blue over Greece and the wine-

colored sea still sparkles in the sunlight. The surface of the land is still modelled like a waffle and the coast still reaches protecting hands into the deep, but where are the Hellenes of yore?

What were some of the characteristics of the Hellenic civilization which may in part explain its extraordinary flowering of the arts? The first thing that one notices is the fact that the love of beauty and the practice of the handicrafts were traditional with this people. While sculpture developed in one hundred and fifty years from an almost kindergarten-stage to the sublime east pediment of the Parthenon, the humbler forms of art had flourished from time immemorial. A necessary result—as well as cause—would be a host of skilled craftsmen able to produce beautiful things and to appreciate the competence of other artisans. The Greeks had also many customs and enthusiasms which pointed directly toward the development of art appreciation. Their great athletic tournaments at Olympia and Delphi and other shrines were the magnificent public expression of a deep-seated belief in the value of the human body. The creator was honored by grateful cultivation of his best gifts. These

famous games were, of course, but the finals of a series of gymnastic exercises which extended throughout youth and which were practised in every city of Greece. Add to this training the educational and inspiring effect of the Greek chorus and the majesty of the spoken drama of those days, and one realizes how favorable was the atmosphere for noble artistic achievement. Most potent of all these factors was the religion which the Greek professed. As clean-cut and cameo-like as the temple on its hill—the Parthenon upon the Acropolis—was the mythology of this people. In it was nothing of the monstrous and the nebulous of other faiths. It was superbly, serenely beautiful. Robert Ingersoll used to like to shock our ancestors: "An honest man is the noblest work of God", he would quote, and then add with a smile, "Yes, and an honest God is the noblest work of man." There is a profound thought here. You can form an accurate estimate of the civilization and the character of a people through its ideals of divinity. Where will you find anything nobler than the Athenian's conception of Athena—his own glorious Athena? The virgin goddess embodied his

highest ideal of intelligence, of grace and of purity. The most ecstatic medieval dream of the Madonna falls short of this celestial vision. Every ceremonial connected with her worship was in itself a work of art. The pan-Athenaic procession literally carved itself in Pentelic marble; by force of sheer beauty it compelled its own perpetuation.

They had wealth and they had independence. Whether you call Pericles' high finance "investment" or "embezzlement", we know that means were abundant and that the great work on the Acropolis was pushed to its triumphant completion in a brief thirteen years.

They had leadership—an undisputed leadership that Athens had not known for many a long year. With a man like Pericles at the helm and such artists as Phidias and the architects Ictinos and Callicrates to carry out his bidding what wonders may not be accomplished!

There was another time when wonderful things happened on this earth of ours. It was in France in the days of Philip Augustus, who reigned from 1180 until 1223. What started it all we do not pretend to say; we only know

that myriads of churches and chapels sprang into existence at that time. Paris was the center of this pious activity; why, Paris looks on the map like a bull's eye in a target fairly peppered with cathedrals. The amazing thing is that every man, woman and child in each community was devoted to the great and splendid purpose of creating something beautiful. Can you imagine such a thing? Every day when the stone was ready in the quarry and the call came, noblemen and serfs alike hastened to get hold of the great ropes and pull those blocks up with a shout. They were building something magnificent; they were buying salvation; and, incidentally, they were trying to surpass the next town! There was just enough of the human in it all to make it a glorious rivalry. And so on creaking carts they dragged the enormous blocks to the city—sometimes eight miles away. Then the sculptors and the painters and the metal-workers did their part. The designers in glass added their crowning magic, and throughout all was the inspiration of noble music. One of the old writers says:—"And when the work was done they went home and left a miracle standing there on the plain."

Yes, a great white miracle in stone! They had made it vast enough to cover the entire community; high enough to bring their prayers and incense close to the throne above. In the smug pride of our ignorance we call those times "The Dark Ages." Think of it, "The Dark Ages!" How I wish that some glow of those "Dark Ages" might come down to us; that we too might know the thrill of working together to create Beauty!

In a measure, similar conditions obtained in the Florence of the fifteenth century. Let me quote an illuminating paragraph from "A Florentine Revery", by my friend, Dr. H. H. Powers. "A few steps brings us to a mass of streets packed with the busiest and cleverest artisans in the world. Here one is giving the last touches to an artistic copper vessel which without joints or solder he is fashioning from a single piece. Another is riveting a piece of armor, another engraving with infinite deftness a golden brooch. There are whole streets given over to cloth-dressers, who give work to the spinners and weavers and fullers and dyers in numberless back rooms and attics. There are smiths and carvers of wood and gilders, and joiners, and fashioners of

beautiful things in clay and wood and bronze and iron and gold, in marble from Carrara and alabaster from Volterra."

If this picture of joyous industry is strangely different from anything that we know today, so too was its compelling impulse—religion, with all its ceremonies, vivid and picturesque beyond anything that we can imagine. Church building and church decoration were encouraged by eternal rewards and their neglect punished by unspeakable penalties. When has this round earth ever known such a "going concern"! Finally, and perhaps the greatest influence of all toward making Florence the home of art, was the constant, enthusiastic encouragement by such men as Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici. It was of these leaders that Macaulay so happily observed that the fine arts profited alike by the severity of their judgment, and by the liberality of their patronage.

Which, if any, of these favoring conditions do we possess today in America? We lack the European traditions of beauty; the accumulated inheritance of artistry, product of immemorial efforts to adorn. We lack the joy of creating, the habit of the handicrafts

which opens the way to mightier achievement —the one thing which makes great art possible. The inheritance was cut off from us. Our ancestors turned their backs on art when they came here. Let me illustrate with an incident of long ago. At the age of twenty I happened to take a trip to England with my father, and we toured at our leisure through the country. I remember that somewhere in that chaplet of cathedrals stretched along the east coast—in Peterborough or Ely or Lincoln, was it?—we observed high up on the grey walls many mouldering statues, all with broken noses. We asked the aged verger, who seemed to be as old as the cathedral itself, how this had happened. His quaint answer was: "Mr. Cromwell's men did it, sir." Mr. Cromwell's men were very busy. If they could not pull down the statues they could at least break their noses "to the glory of God." It was from "Mr. Cromwell's men" that many of us are descended.

To have art in this country there must be an artistic atmosphere; there must be thousands of skillful hands—thousands of craftsmen who are able to recognize and appreciate triumphs of artistry. Walt Whitman wrote:

"To have great poetry you must have great audiences too." The same thought is developed by another who truly says: "Great art demands passionate appreciation." In other words you cannot hope to develop art unless appreciation welcomes it. But how are we to have appreciation without the art which cultivates it? It is a vicious circle, you see, almost as hopeless as the old conundrum of the country "groceries", "Which came first, the hen or the egg?" The answer, I believe, has never been definitely determined by either the biologists or the village wiseacres, but one thing is certain: you cannot start a successful poultry farm with neither hen nor eggs! That is the difficulty in regard to art. We are doing well, we think—as well as some other lands—but the fact is that we are not vitally interested in the most important thing of all, the creation of an ideal civilization. How few of us use our hands skilfully; how few care to. One of our leading educators tells us that the tacit implication in most of our schools is: "Now, Johnny, study hard so that you won't have to work when you are grown up." This attitude is unfortunate in more ways than one. It tends to separate us into classes. When

the ambition of half of our people is to avoid work with the hands—when they despise those who have to work—it is indeed a dangerous time for democracy.

It has been said that one trouble with our art lies in the fact that modern life has no mythology. We would never admit that we are less moral than our ancestors, but no one will claim that our religion of today is the vivid thing that it was in the times which we have just considered. It cannot be diagrammed nor can it be very successfully pictured. The things that we believe would make very thin frescoes and sculpture more attenuated than the kings of Chartres. Our faith has not even a symbolism which will go far for decorative purposes.

Closely bound up with the preceding is another lack. It is something intangible and difficult to describe. I refer to the simplicity of mind, that naive earnestness, which one feels behind the great masterpieces of the ages as well as in all of man's more primitive efforts toward artistic expression. "Sad sincerity" is a matter of temperament, but Sincerity, sad or joyous, is a constant factor in the lasting achievement of mankind. In the present

period of sophistication serious projects are seldom attempted; "the heir of the ages" knows it all and apparently considers nothing very much worth while. The result is that his work is seldom convincing. We all do trifles; our "hasty sketches" are but "parodies" and "arrangements". Our most sustained efforts have the air of "stunts." We have left far behind us those of whom it was said; "And the handicraft of their work was their prayer."

But let us not be downcast. We have several favoring conditions of the greatest importance. First of all, we are an intelligent and an educated people. Not quite so intelligent and educated as we imagine, perhaps, but nevertheless headed the right way. Our optimistic census tells us that only six percent of our population are illiterate; the exemption boards found twenty-five percent of our young men unable to read with understanding and to write intelligibly. (Compare this with the ratio of the illiterate to three thousand, in the German army!) However this is a mere detail which we shall attend to at once, no doubt. On the whole we desire to be counted intelligent, and that is something. As Dr.

Millikan says; "Our age has discovered the idea of progress."

We have wealth,—"Wealth to burn." And how we keep the home fires crackling! Whatever may be the depression in our individual income-tax returns, we are a rich people—the richest people in the world, the envy of the nations. Likewise we are a restless people, always "on the go;" doing business at "high pressure" and taking our enjoyment at high speed. With this impulse and the means to gratify it, we are developing such facilities for communication as the world has never known. Long have our railroads lured youth city-ward with their "cloud of smoke by day and pillar of fire by night", but never until the present has our entire population been on wheels. Of course, we are crazy, but this come-and-go between towns is bound to result in comparison and in beneficial rivalries. The immediate visible return may be a patchwork of pop-stands and "hot-dog" kennels, springing up like weeds by the wayside, but out of all this neighborly intercourse will come accelerated development of city planning and improved community housekeeping.

Our school system is doing much enlightened work in art appreciation as well as in the fundamentals of drawing and other crafts. The opportunity is there for immeasurable usefulness. Our state colleges are beginning to wake up to their responsibilities. Notably in the domestic arts do they show valuable results. If only in helping youth to "find itself," they repay a thousandfold their cost.

Great organizations like the American Federation of Arts and the Carnegie Educational Foundation are giving admirable service; the former in its wide distribution of exhibits and literature, the latter in the specific work of preparing leadership. Our American enthusiasm for organization, which is said to lead every chance group of three at once to elect a president, a secretary and a treasurer, recalls the comment of a visiting Englishman when told of a community's cultural endeavor, its Browning clubs, etc., "Extraordinary! We read Browning at home, but it does not require a club." Occasionally we might with profit remind ourselves of Thoreau's warning against "improved means toward unimproved ends." However America must work it out in her own way, and well pleased are we with

our way. For instance, since my arrival in Chicago forty-two years ago, I have seen its Art Institute grow from a couple of rented rooms and a roller top desk to an establishment worth ten millions of dollars, with an annual budget of a million; an attendance of the same number and a school of three thousand pupils, not to mention a greater number of exhibitions each year than is offered in any other institution in America.

In the same time I have noted the founding and prosperous growth of similar enterprises in these neighboring cities: Cleveland, Columbus, Akron, Dayton, Toledo, Detroit, Muskegon, Grand Rapids, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Louisville, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Davenport, Omaha, Lincoln, Kansas City, Denver, St. Louis, Memphis, Nashville and all over Texas. Fully one half of these new centers acknowledge their spiritual ancestry by adopting the name of the Chicago institution; they call themselves "Art Institutes." Most of them have schools, doing excellent work, modern but not insane. Their students go forth into all the world; whether as artists, as teachers, or merely as housewives; they are

doing service to civilization and promoting the nation's ideals.

One of our greatest needs is intelligent and sympathetic leadership. A Pericles, a Lorenzo de' Medici, we can hardly look for, but in every community there are a few individuals who exemplify Plato's ideal city: "a group of men living a common life for a noble end." Among them spring up magnetic leaders like Charles L. Hutchinson of Chicago, Halsey C. Ives, of St. Louis, and George W. Stevens and Edward D. Libbey, who worked so happily together in Toledo. Every institution in the above list could name one or more men who have made the enterprise possible; enthusiasts in whom the great Idea was incarnated. Our Mr. Hutchinson in thirty years' presidency, never omitted his morning visit to the Art Institute on his way to his bank. Who can estimate the influence of such a teacher as Charles Eliot Norton? The University of Colorado has known the persuasive eloquence of the life of Dr. J. Raymond Brackett, who long blessed this student-body as our dear Jean Sherwood has blessed the community at large.

We have plenty of self-appointed leaders of another sort; "art critics" who seem to take a malevolent pleasure in bewildering our art-ignorant public. With some the incentive is obvious—to help dealers sell whatever they have to sell. Certain of our well-known writers are recognized as having sold themselves into the bargain. Others are brilliant men, admirable commentators on other subjects, who suffer a lesion of the brain whenever they approach painting and sculpture. Out of scores of examples let me quote one; a rhapsody on Brancusi's "Kiss." Brancusi is a clever sculptor and has a right to have fun with his work and with the public. One rather admires the gay effrontery with which he bumps together a couple of brick-bats, inserts a bulging eye in each and calls his composition, "The Kiss." It is good sport. But see what the portentous critic finds there: "It is called 'The Kiss'; the lips emphasize it; but the kiss is the kiss of perfect oneness; it has no beginning and no end; this solid block represents, unlike Robin's kisses, not a man and a woman considered as separate beings, but their union," after which he tells us about, "absolute form, not the form which changes

with place, age, milieu, and a thousand contingencies." Whereupon youthful drawing-teachers go forth and tell their bewildered pupils, as I have heard them, to "represent *real* form, not the aspect of things." In other words, to close their eyes and draw something that they do not see! They try to—do you wonder that insanity is on the increase?

Another example: Cezanne was an honest if rather inept craftsman, respected by his contemporaries for his serious attitude toward his art. No one would be more surprised than himself to find his work made today the object of a cult by people who apparently know no other name. A second group say their prayers to the ingenious Matisse. The unspeakable Derain has his followers, and so has Rousseau, "*le Douanier*", whose innocence so long rejoiced the *Quartier*. To magnify these discoveries of the dealers, men like our great Sargent are reviled—Sargent's fame can stand it!—and Whistler is forgotten. Of course noble painters like Abbott Thayer and Winslow Homer might as well never have been born. The only old master worth mentioning in some circles is El Greco. Velasquez, Rubens, Rembrandt, Hals, Titian, Giorgione,

Veronese and Tintoretto are dead and buried. If you concede the technical ability of "The Greek", but venture a feeble criticism on his funny drawing and his novel proportions, you are gravely assured that these are the very things which made him immortal; his distortions are his chief claim to glory! Do not smile, they have a blacklist and you will never be admitted to see the weird wonders of the Argyrol Foundation! Some of the eastern schools have succumbed to this madness. Two or three colleges are teaching it. Last year the one-honored Art Students' League made an exhibit of putrescent work which was a tragic surprise to many.

But never mind the false prophets. They will go their way in due season—to be followed no doubt by another army of wild-eyed propagandists with something new to sell. Let us see what America really is accomplishing and what we have reason to hope for.

First of all, more important than our painting, more important than our sculpture; yes, more important even than our proud American architecture, must be put our commercial art. What advertisers we are! Through our newspapers, our magazines, our billboards,

every one of America's millions of inhabitants is reached. Much of this advertising is cheap and untrustworthy, some of it is positively vulgar, but do you realize that at its best it represents the finest talent in America? Twenty years ago a young artist might have spurned the temptation and talked of "selling his soul." Today any one of us would be happy to sell his soul to this great industry. What other craft would give a man such a public? By what magic art could he reach so many of his fellow-countrymen? No one hates billboards more than I do—when they are in the wrong place. I detest "Burrowes' Rustless Fly-Screens", advertised in the green meadows of central New York; and Castoria's appeals, however insinuating, always worry me amid the rugged scenery of Pennsylvania; but I confess a tender emotion toward the "Palm Olive" girls and I rejoice in the sturdiness of the "Old Gold" smoker. In many of our towns the billboard is the only bit of color and the nearest approach to great artistry. It is truly the poor man's art gallery. The old church decorations were but glorified posters, made for advertising the church's wares. They were made to "sell" salvation. The success-

ful poster must have the same fundamental virtues of inviting design and color and, above all, legibility. On billboard and magazine cover our men are solving these problems, often with triumphant success. Everybody in America sees the results. Often the "ad" is more valuable than the thing advertised, but efficiency has taken notice and in not a few cases the object advertised has been redesigned to correspond with the beautiful "prospectus." Often, too, it must be confessed, the advertising pages of our magazines are far more interesting than the "literary matter."

In regard to American architecture, I would say; it is not coming: it is here. Our new office buildings are as notable a product of their time and land as were the cathedrals of Europe, of theirs. We have been hoping for a native art. Behold it here in full bloom, complete! Have you seen New York this year, or Chicago, within six months? Our Chicago skyline is completely changed; we have a city of monumental towers, as picturesque as San Gimignano, as stately as old time Florence, but immensely magnified. They are beautiful. Some years ago I found

myself admiring one of the first of these new towers of Babel, in New York City. Its austere severity delighted me. I inquired the name of the architect: "Oh, there is no architect," was the astonishing reply; "that building was designed by the contractor!" And it was explained to me that this construction was the product of a new building ordinance; this monumental effect, these admirable "setbacks" were all prescribed by law. Today the best designers are elaborating the theme and refining its parts, but the monumental mass is fundamental. It has come to stay.

We all rejoice in the magnificent ecclesiastical architecture which America is creating. Only last week I heard an authority state that this country has produced within the last twenty years more notable churches than Europe has built in the last three hundred. Such designers as Cram and Goodhue have brought a wealth of beauty into our cities. Yet more important in many communities are the schoolhouses which our people are erecting with such lavish generosity. In their dignity and in their purpose of serving all, they come nearest to expressing the cathedral-idea of old. Nothing is too good

for our children: we recognize that in building well our schools we are strengthening our nation's very life. Through all this friendly rivalry of our cities there is constant competition and therefore progress. Our architects are acquiring knowledge and developing an admirable competence.

Finally, in the evolution of the American home, with its good taste, its comfort and its adaptation to our peculiar needs, we have added a new aesthetic element. Every choice home works all of the time for the betterment of our civilization. We were startled a while back by the statement that the Ladies' Home Journal had done more in this direction than any other single factor. I am inclined to agree. Beauty, as well as vulgarity finds wonderful circulation in the America of today!

After a ramble in one of our current exhibitions one might say of modern painting that "appearances are against it"! There are shows in New York as well as in Paris and Berlin which are nauseating. Like the girl "so frank that you can talk with her on any subject", they "insist upon talking of nothing else!" But if you succeed in finding a room full of the old-timers you will need no prompt-

ing to observe how dull and monotonous most of the canvases of only thirty years ago look in comparison with the average of today. Through all this upheaval much new life has come into view. The men who know how to draw and take the trouble to do it, those who have an instinct for color and who study its harmonies, are greatly profiting. I am convinced that even in this period of anarchy and confusion there is real progress. I am not much concerned over the idle and the degenerate. Nature is prodigal and fortunately the mortality is great. If we have no towering genius today in the field of painting, we have an astonishing amount of talent and of skill. Never has there been so much in this country. We are quite sure that there are no better landscape painters on earth than are a score of our Americans. We have many admirable portraitists. If we have no historic and genre painters it is because the species is extinct throughout the world—dead as the dodo, excepting in one form, and that is mural painting. Here, thanks to the impulse given by the Columbian Exposition and since protected by various discerning architects a very splendid achievement has been wrought upon

American walls. Blashfield is easily leader of the generation which first won recognition for the venerable art. The field is now occupied by men of various and notable gifts; the names of Eugene Savage, Ezra Winter and Maxfield Parrish occur at once. Whistler and Pennell gave American etching a great fame. Of late it has developed by leaps and bounds. We may have no individuals equal today to the two pioneers, but we have scores in every city who are doing admirable work and—what is no less important—interesting thousands in their products.

Sculpture as a more static, a more phlegmatic art, is less liable to surprising revolutions. But even sculpture has its fashions and certain rather perplexing phases have revealed themselves of late. The epidemic of archaicism has attacked many of our younger men. How could they escape it when all Europe is broken out with the same disorder? In their striving for simplicity not a few of the European sculptors seem to have become child-impersonators; they are using a vast amount of sophistication in order to appear "naif". They ransack Asia, Africa, and the isles of the sea in search of primitive awkwardness. Eyes

like buttonholes cheerfully staring out of the side of the skull; hair bunches of celery or rows of snails, attenuated figures from ten to twelve heads high or else squat as a toad—one has his choice, just so that he avoids anything life-like—such seem to be the chief claims to public attention of many of the masters of the hour.

However, common sense will prevail and, as in painting, much good is likely to follow the shake-up. America has today many more able sculptors than ever before. There is a much higher standard of workmanship and a more distinct idea of the meaning of sculpture. While in country towns the omnipresent bronze doughboy going "Over the Top" still suggests the art of the taxidermist or that of the show-window decorator, many of our recent public monuments are really monumental. Such explosive efforts as the groups on the Lincoln Memorial at Springfield, Illinois, and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument of Cleveland, are impossible today. They are gone with the rearing bronze horses and flashing sabres of another generation. The quiet dignity of the works of Saint Gaudens and his pupils, above all their example of technical

probity, have done much to educate the public and to make good sculpture welcome in America. Another auspicious omen is the growing popularity of this art with our architects. Lonesome effigies no longer promenade on pediment-shelves like workmen on their scaffolds, but our public buildings show a gratifying use of sculpture which has been intelligently adapted to its purpose. Stone is treated as stone; bronze and terra-cotta play their admirable part in appropriate locations. Goodhue, in the Nebraska State Capitol and elsewhere, introduced decorative figures which spring from the rock itself. They seem organic with the structure of the walls which they adorn. The influence of such bold yet restrained use of sculpture will soon reach every city. All that we need is to see more good art.

SCIENCE AND MODERN LIFE

SCIENCE AND MODERN LIFE

ROBERT A. MILLIKAN

This summer it was my lot to be called out of my laboratory to attend in rapid succession (1) a meeting of the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations at Geneva, a body called into being for the sake of assisting in laying better foundations for international goodwill and understanding than have heretofore existed; (2) the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Leeds, one of the most important of the Old World's scientific bodies whose meetings have marked the milestones of scientific progress; and (3) the International Congress of Physics held at Como and at Rome in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the death of Alessandro Volta, the discoverer of current electricity and thus in a certain sense the initiator of this amazing electrical century just ended—suitable errands to inspire reflections on the place of science in modern life. I should like to present them in the form of a few pictures.

As we sped, a thousand persons across the Atlantic in an oil burning ship in which even the modern stoker whose "hard fate" has often been held up as a symbol of the evils of our "mechanical age" has now a comfortable and an interesting job, for he simply and quietly guides the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of man power represented in the energy of separated hydrogen and oxygen and carbon atoms rushing eagerly together to fulfill their pre-determined destiny, and merely incidentally in so doing sending the ship racing across the Atlantic, in the face of that situation could I, or could any one not completely blind to the significance of modern life, fail to reflect upon somewhat as follows? If Cicero or Pericles, or any man of any preceding civilization, had been sent on a similar errand, had he had any power at all except the winds, it would have been the man power furnished to the triremes by the straining sinews of hundreds of human slaves chained to their oars, slaves to be simply cast aside, kicked out into the sea, if they weakened or gave out, and then replaced by other slaves! Could any man fail to reflect that our scientific civilization is the first one in history which has not been

built on just such human slavery, the first which offers the hope, at least, and a hope already partially realized, of relieving mankind forever from the worst of the physical slavery with which all civilizations have heretofore enchained him, whether it be the slavery represented by Millet's man with the hoe—a dumb beast-like broken backed agricultural drudge—or the slavery at the galley pictured in Ben Hur, or the slavery of the pyramid builders referred to in the books of Moses. Or again, could any one who stood with me at the base of the column of Trajan, matchless relic and symbol of the unequalled magnificence of Rome, fail to muse first that ancient man in the immensity and daring of his undertakings, in the grandeur of his conceptions, in the beauty and skill of his workmanship, in his whole intellectual equipment was fully our equal if not our superior, for we shall leave no monuments like his. But could he also fail to reflect that ancient man built these monuments solely through the unlimited control of enforced human labor; while we have not only freed his slave but have made him the master and director of the giant but insensible Titans of the lower world. That

through coal and oil we have given to him freedom and opportunity. This is one side of the picture of science and the modern world, a side that can be presented with a thousand variants but all having the same inspiring significance.

Another picture—In a comfortable English home out in the country of North England a small group is seated sipping after dinner coffee, enjoying their conversation and interrupting it now and then to listen to something particularly fine that is coming in over the radio. The technique of the reproduction is superb, but no more so than with which we are familiar in our American homes, for the whole broadcasting idea, as well as the main part of its technical development is American in its origin. But the program that is on the air in England is incomparably superior to anything to be heard here, for the English government has taken over completely the control of the radio. It collects from each owner of a receiving set twelve shillings a year, and then with the large funds thus obtained—for there are many radio fans in England as in America, it provides the radioland public of England with the largest return in education and in

entertainment for eight mills a night ever provided, I suspect, anywhere in the history of the world. For it employs only high class speakers, musicians, and entertainers of all sorts, so that the whole British nation is now being given educational advantages of the finest possible sort through the radio at less than a cent a family a night, collected only from those who wish to use it. And it is not merely the subject matter of the radio programs that is commendable. The value of giving the whole British public the opportunity to hear the English language used, not merely correctly, but used in intonations and otherwise as cultured people are wont to use it, is altogether inestimable. And sitting there in the North of England we had but to turn the dial to the wave length used by Berlin and we heard an equally authoritative use of the German language, and I envisaged a whole population, or as many of them as wished, learning a new language, easily and correctly, instead of through the stupidities of grammar, as we now go at it. What a stimulant to the imagination! What possibilities are here, only just beginning to be realized, for public education, for the enrichment of the life of

the country dweller, as well as the city resident, solely because of such an influence as this of modern physics upon modern life.

Now turn to another picture which presents the other side of the story. Sir Arthur Keith, the foremost British anthropologist, is now the President of the British Association. The Leeds meeting represented the fiftieth anniversary of the meeting at which Darwin's then new theory of evolution had been first vigorously debated. Sir Arthur took this summer as the subject of his presidential address,"The present status of Darwin's theory". He showed that fifty years of fossil study had given extraordinary confirmation to the general outline of the evolutionary conception, had placed it indeed upon well nigh impregnable foundations.

The following Sunday the Bishop of Ripon preached upon science and modern life. He thought we were gaining new scientific knowledge and acquiring control of stupendous new forces faster than we were developing our abilities to control ourselves, faster than we were exhibiting capacity to be entrusted with these new forces and hence he suggested that science as a whole take a ten-year holiday.

When the next day the newspaper men who had had as good a story out of the whole incident as our newspapers got out of the Scopes trial pressed the Bishop to define more sharply just what he meant by a ten-year scientific holiday, he said that he thought the workers in medicine and in public health ought not to stop, since then the germs of disease might steal a march on us and avoidable suffering be thereby caused. He had had in mind, rather, a vacation for physics and chemistry and the parts of biology not associated with the improvement of health and the alleviation of suffering.

The Bishop's explanation is of value as throwing an illuminating sidelight upon the sort of emotionalism, misunderstanding and confusion of ideas represented in much of the present public antagonism to scientific progress. The question which the Bishop raises is proper enough but the conclusion is altogether incorrect; for first, physics and chemistry cannot take a holiday without turning off the power on all the other sciences that depend upon them; and second, physics, chemistry and genetics are, in fact, the great constructive sciences which alone stand between

mankind and its dire fate foreseen by Malthus; while the palliative sciences such as the Bishop mentioned without the others only hasten and make inevitable the horrors of that day.

The incident is presented because it is illustrative of a widespread attitude as to the danger of flooding the world with too much knowledge. The fear of knowledge is quite as old as the Garden of Eden. Prometheus was chained to a rock and had his liver torn out by a vulture because he dared to steal knowledge from the Gods and bring it down to men. The story of Faust which permeates literature up to within a hundred years is evidence of the widespread, age-long belief in the liaison between the man of knowledge and the powers of darkness. It will persist so long as superstition, as distinct from reverence, lasts.

But there is a real question not to be thus easily disposed of which the Bishop's sermon put before the man of science. It is this. Am I myself a broadly enough educated man to distinguish, when I am engaged in the work of reconstruction, between the truth of the past and error of the past, and not to pull them both down together? Am I sufficiently famil-

iar with what the past has learned and what it therefore actually has to teach, and am I enough of a statesman not to remove any brick from the structure of man's progress until I see how to replace it by a better one? Such justification as there may be for the public's distrust of science is due to the misrepresentation of science by some of its uneducated devotees. For men without any real understanding are of course to be found in all the walks of life. This problem, however, is not at all peculiar to science. Such men are quite as common among humanists as among scientists. Let another incident illustrate.

Not long ago I heard a certain humanist, a literary man of magnificent craftsmanship and fine influence in his own field, declare that he saw no values in our modern "mechanical age". Further, this same man recently visited a plant where the very foundations of our modern civilization are being laid. A ton of earth lies underneath a mountain. Scattered through that ton in infinitesimal grains is just two dollars worth of copper. That ton of earth is being dug out of its resting place, transported to the mill miles away, the infinitesimal particles of copper miraculously

picked out by invisible chemical forces, then deposited in great sheets by the equally invisible physical forces of the electric current, then shipped three thousand miles and again refined, then drawn into wires to transport the formerly wasted energy of a water-fall, and all these operations from the buried ton of Arizona dirt to refined copper in New York done at a cost of less than two dollars, for there was no more value there.

This amazing achievement not only did not interest the humanist, but he complained about disfiguring the desert by electrical transmission lines. Unbelievable blindness—a soul without a spark of imagination else it would have seen the hundred thousand horses which are actually tugging along each of those wires, transforming the desert into a garden, making it possible for him and his kind to live and work without standing on the bowed backs of human slaves as his prototype has always done in ages past. Seen in this role, that humanist was neither humanist nor philosopher, for he was not really interested in humanity. In this picture it is the scientist who is the real humanist. Nevertheless, the Bishop of Ripon was right enough in distrusting the

wisdom and sometimes even the morality of individual scientists, and of individual humanists, too. But the remedy is certainly not "to give science a holiday". That is both impossible and foolish. It is rather *to reconstruct and extend our educational processes so as to make broader-gauge and better educated scientists and humanists alike.* There is absolutely no other remedy.

But, says some one, these pictures so far deal only with the superficial aspects of life. What has science to say to him whose soul is hungry, to him who cries "Man shall not live by bread alone". Has it anything more than a dry crust to offer him? The response is instant and unambiguous. Within the past half century as a direct result of the findings of modern science there has developed an evolutionary philosophy—an evolutionary religion, too, if you will—which has given a new emotional basis to life, the most inspiring and the forward-looking that the world has thus far seen. For, first, the findings of physics, chemistry and astronomy have brought to light a universe of extraordinary and unexpected orderliness, and of the wondrous beauty and harmony that go with order. It is the same

story whether one looks out upon the island universes brought to light by modern astronomy, and located definitely, some of them, a million light years away, or whether he looks down into the molecular world of chemistry, or through it to the electronic world of physics, or peers even inside the nucleus of the atom.

Again in the organic world, the sciences of geology, paleontology, and biology have brought to light even still more wonderfully and orderly development from lower up to higher forms, from smaller up to larger capacities—a development which can be definitely seen to have been going on for millions upon millions of years and which therefore gives promise of going on for ages yet to be.

A fire mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jelly fish and a saurian,
And caves where cavemen dwell.
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod.
Some call it evolution
And others call it God.

That sort of sentiment is the gift of modern science to the world.

And there is one further finding of modern science which has a tremendous inspirational appeal. It is the discovery of the vital part which we ourselves are playing in the evolutionary process. For man himself has within two hundred years discovered new forces with the aid of which he is now consciously and very rapidly making over both his physical and his biological environment. The Volta Centenary typical of our electrical age was representative of the one, the stamping out of yellow fever is an illustration of the other.

Again, if the biologist is right that the biological evolution of the human organism is going on so slowly that man himself is not now endowed with capacities appreciably different from those which he brought with him into the period of recorded history, then, since within this period the forward strides which man has made in his control over his environment, in the development of his civilization, have been stupendous and unquestionable, it follows that the progress which man has made since history began has been due not to the betterment of his stock but rather primarily *to the passing on of the accumulated knowledge of the race to the generations following after.*

The great instruments of progress are then research, the discovery of new knowledge, and education, the passing on of the store of accumulated wisdom to our followers. This puts the immediate destinies of the race, or of our section of the race, or of our section of our country, largely in our own hands. This spirit and this conviction is the gift of modern science to the world. Is it then too much to say that modern science has remade philosophy and revivified religion?

The next picture brings into the foreground what I regard as the most important contribution of science to modern life. The scene is laid in Geneva, the occasion a meeting of the Council of the League of Nations. The speaker is Nansen, the tall, white haired, rugged faced, heavily mustached Norwegian explorer, now directing the tamed and controlled energies of his fierce Viking blood to trying to find a solution to the tragic situation of the Armenians, a situation to which heretofore there has been no solution except extermination. After four years of effort he brings in a discouraging report and thinks the League of Nations must write down "the record of its first failure". He requests the Council to

strike the Armenian matter from its program, promising, however, to keep at it himself, and to try through other agencies to find a solution. Then Briand of France speaks. Quietly he begs Nansen not yet to despair of the League's assistance. He is sure some solution can be found, and promises that his country, in financial straights though it be, will not be lacking in lending its assistance. The representatives of other nations follow in similar vein, and the problem is retained on the Council's program, and the conviction is at least fortified that *with the right kind of attack a solution may yet be found to an age-old difficulty—that extermination is not the only answer to race rivalry.*

With the right sort of attack!! What is it that the League of Nations as a whole is trying to do? It is trying for the first time in human history to use *the objective mode of approach* to international difficulties in the conviction that there is some better solution than the arbitrament of war. But whence has come that conviction? It is itself a contribution of modern science to modern life. In the days of the jungle war was the best solution, —at least it was the only solution. It was

Nature's way of enabling the fittest to survive, and we are not so far past the days of the jungle yet. Within fifty years as great an historian as Edward Meyer, and as great a humanist as John Ruskin, have lauded war as the finest developer of a people. But the growth of modern science has demonstrated that it is no longer in general the best way to enable the fittest to survive. The great war profited no one. It injured all the main participants. Modern science has created a new world in which the old rules no longer work.

New occasions teach new duties
Time makes ancient good uncouth.
He must upward still and onward
Who would keep abreast of truth.

Alfred Nobel was perhaps not far from right when he thought that he had taken the main step to the abolition of war by the invention of nitro-glycerine. He has, I suspect, exerted a larger influence in that direction than have all the sentimental pacifist organizations that have ever existed. For sentimental pacifism is, after all, but a return to the method of the jungle. It is in the jungle that emotionalism alone determines conduct, and wherever that is true no other than the law of the jungle is

possible. For the emotion of hate is sure sooner or later to follow on the emotion of love, and then there is a spring at the throat. It is altogether obvious that the only quality which really distinguishes man from the brutes is his reason. This may be an unsafe guide, but *he has absolutely no other*. The reason that war must be largely, if not wholly, eliminated is that because of the growth of modern science it is no longer profitable for a country to engage in aggressive war. The risks to its own life are too great, as the last war showed. The nations of the world are forced by the advances in modern science to find some other way to solve their international difficulties. Sentimental pacifism has nothing to do with it. It is a hindrance rather than a help. It acts rather as a stimulant than as a deterrent to war by rendering the dangers to the aggressor less real than they otherwise would be. There is no sort of alternative except to set up in international matters precisely as we have already done in intercommunity and interstate affairs some sort of an organization for making studies by the objective method of international difficulties and finding other solutions.

But what exactly do I mean by the objective method? Somebody has said that "What we call the process of reasoning is merely the process of rearranging one's prejudices", and we admit the truth of this assertion when we say, as we so often do, "Oh, yes, I understand that is the excuse, but what is, after all, the reason?" Indeed, there is no question but that a large part of what we call reasoning is in fact simply the rearranging of prejudices. In so far, for example, as we are Republicans, or Democrats, or Presbyterians, or Catholics, or Mohammedans, or prohibitionists, because our fathers bore those brands, and many of us will be admitted *by our acquaintances*, at least, to have no other real grounds for our labels, our so-called reasonings on these subjects certainly consist in nothing more than the rearrangement of our prejudices. The lawyer who takes a case first and develops his argument later, is obviously only rearranging his preconceptions.

If, however, one wishes to obtain a clear idea of what the objective method is he has only to become acquainted with the way in which all problems are attacked in the analytical sciences. In physics, for example, the

procedure in problem solving is always first to collect the facts, i.e., to make the observations with complete honesty and complete disregard of all theories and all presuppositions, and then to analyze the data to see what conclusions follow necessarily from them, or what interpretations are consistent with them. This method while not confined at all to the physical sciences is nevertheless commonly known as the scientific method in recognition of the fact that it has had its fullest development and its most conspicuous use in the sciences. Indeed, I regard the development and spread of this method as the most important contribution of science to life for *it represents the only hope of the race of ultimately getting out of the jungle.* The method can in no way be acquired and understood so well as by the study of the analytical sciences, and hence an education which has left out these sciences has in my judgment lost the most vital element in all education. Nor is that merely the individual judgment of a prejudiced scientist, as the following quotation from one of the most prominent humanists and member of the law faculty of the Harvard University shows:

"It is the glory of pure science and of mathematics that these subjects train men in orderly and objective thinking as no other subjects can. Here are fields of study in which loose or crooked thought leads inevitably to demonstrable error, to error which cannot be glossed over or concealed. Here are branches of knowledge in which there is no confusion between right and wrong, between post hocs and propter hocs, between the mere coincidences and the consequences of a cause. When you have finished with a problem in any of the exact sciences you are either right or wrong, and you know it. That is why we call them exact sciences, to distinguish them from philosophy, sociology, economics, and the other social sciences, in which the difference between truth and error is still, in most cases, a matter of individual opinion. Many years ago physics was known as 'natural philosophy'; it was merely a body of speculative ideas concerning the mechanics of nature. It became an exact science by developing an inductive methodology, which makes all the difference between science and guesswork.

"Some years ago, in the Harvard Law School, we thought it worthwhile to enquire

into the educational antecedents of the student body, with a view to ascertaining whether there was any relation between success in the study of law and the previous collegiate training of these young men. In the Harvard Law School there are more than a thousand students, all of them college graduates, drawn from every section of the country. Nearly all of them have specialized, during their undergraduate years, in some single subject or group of subjects—languages, history, science, philosophy, economics, mathematics, and so on. Offhand one would probably say that the young man who had devoted most of his attention to the study of history, government, and economics while in college would be gaining the best preparation for the study of law—for these are the subjects which in their content come nearest to the law; but that is not what we found. On the contrary the results of this enquiry showed that the young men who had specialized in ancient languages, in the exact sciences, and especially in mathematics, were on the whole better equipped for the study of law, and were making higher rank in it, than were those who had

devoted their energies to subjects more closely akin."

But can education, even in the sciences, do the work fast enough to prevent the catastrophy feared by the Bishop of Ripon? Can we learn to control our emotions and impulses and our new found powers, to take the long view, and to do the rational thing instead of the emotional, or the vicious thing, with the enormous forces given to us by science? Can we alter human nature?

Perhaps the following is a partial answer: Twenty-five years ago if any one had asked you or me or anybody of men however intelligent whether human nature could be so altered in a reasonable time as to make it safe to entrust practically every grown person in California and part of the children with a thirty horse-power locomotive which he might drive at will through the crowded cities and race as he pleased over the country roads of California, the answer would certainly have been a decided negative. Nobody on earth I suspect, would have thought such a result possible. And yet that is precisely what has happened. I marvel at the success of it every time I drive in city streets. I glory in it

when I see the new race of men the taxi business has created in a city like London. Contrast the clear-eyed, sober, skillful, intelligent looking London taxi driver of today with the red nosed wreck of a human being who used to be the London cabby of a quarter century ago, *and see what responsibility and power do in altering human nature.*

Also the picture which modern science has unfolded of the age-long history of the biological organism is one in which it is seen *adapting* itself with marvelous success to changes in external conditions. That we, too, at our end of this evolutionary scale have inherited this adaptability was one of the most striking lessons of the late war in which we settled down to the endurance of what we thought intolerable conditions with amazing rapidity.

If, then, there is any note of optimism in modern life it is the note played by modern science. If there be any escape from Malthusianism—the world's greatest problem—science alone can provide it. The development of science alone with its application to modern life, has made possible in Great Britain the support today of forty million people when a hundred and fifty years ago Benjamin

Franklin called England over populated with eight millions, and Robert Fulton a little later in a prophetic mood saw England holding some time a population of ten million souls. Perhaps this population has today gone too far, but the check is being applied. In both England and Sweden today the birth rate is less than it is in France. *With the creative power of physical science and the application of intelligence to the findings of biological science even this problem of population can be faced with a good measure of hope.* An international union for its continuous study was formed this summer at Geneva. That is the objective way to begin to attack it.

Finally, can science save our civilization from the fate that has befallen its predecessors, the Sumerian, the Egyptian, the Greek, the Roman and the others that have risen and then declined? Are the Kaiserlings, the Spenglers, and the other prophets of decay and death to be regarded as real prophets?

The answer is, of course, a secret of the Gods, but that these "prophets" are "multiplying words without knowledge" is easy to show. For our modern civilization rests upon an altogether new sort of foundation. These

older civilizations have rested upon the discovery of new fields of knowledge or of art —fields which the discoverers have indeed cultivated with such extraordinary skill that they have been able to reach a state of perfection in them that succeeding generations have often been unable to excel. Witness the sepulchral art of the Egyptians, and the perfection of such principles of architecture as they knew how to use; witness the sculpture, the painting, the aesthetic and the purely intellectual life of the Greeks—an accomplishment so great as to inspire an outstanding modern artist to say that there has been no advance in either sculpture or painting since the age of Pericles (let us remember, however, that humanity for all time *is the inheritor of their achievements*); witness the principles of government and of social order discovered by the Romans, or the arch in architecture altogether Roman but reaching perhaps its perfection in the Romanesque and the Gothic of a few centuries later; witness the discovery of the principles of music in central and southern Europe in the middle ages and the perfection that art attained within two or three centuries.

But our modern world is distinctive, not for the discovery of new modes of expression or new fields of knowledge, though it has opened up enough of these, but for the discovery of the very idea of progress, for the discovery, through modern science, of the method by which progress comes about, and for inspiring the world with confidence in the values of that method. So long as the world can be kept thus inspired it is difficult to see how a relapse to another dark ages can take place.

Even if the biological evolution of the human race should not continue—though why should what has been going on for millions of years have come to an end just now?—yet the process by which progress has been made within historic times can scarcely fail to be continuously operative. This process is the discovery of new knowledge by each generation and the transmission to the following generation of the accumulated accomplishment of the past—the discovery of new truth and the passing on of old truth. The importance of both elements in this process has not been realized in the past and dark ages have come. But the means for the spread of knowledge,

for its preservation and transmission, the facilities for universal education and inspiration, the time for leisure and the opportunity for thought for everybody, all these have been so extended by modern science, and are capable of such further extension that no prophecy of decline can possibly have any scientific foundation. Even arguing solely by the method of extrapolation from the past, modern science has shown that the ups and downs on the curve of history are superposed upon a curve whose general trend is upward, and it has therefore brought forth a certain amount of justification for the *faith* that it will continue to be upward. In the last analysis humanity has but one supreme problem, the problem of kindling the torch of enlightened creative effort here and there and everywhere and passing on for the enrichment of the lives of future generations of the truth already discovered. In a single word the problem is *education.*

LITERATURE AND MODERN LIFE

LITERATURE AND MODERN LIFE

PAUL SHOREY

No preface or protest will save an essay or a speaker from misunderstanding. A few hours after an address which I made on this subject, one of my audience, meeting me with a *Saturday Evening Post* under my arm, was as shocked as if he had caught his "dry" Congressman in conference with his bootlegger. Yet I had said nothing that precluded me from reading the *Saturday Evening Post* or Mencken or Dreiser or Sherwood Anderson or Aldous Huxley or Vachel Lindsay or Ben Hecht or Joyce or Frank Swinnerton or H. G. Wells or D. H. Lawrence or Floyd Dell or even Bernard Shaw or any other notoriety of today or yesterday that happened to excite my curiosity or engage my interest or respond to the mood of the moment. My admonition was directed to those who read nothing else but the best-advertised current literature and make it the staple of their thought and the attuner of their feelings.

My sermon was addressed to undergraduates who neglect the irrecoverable oppor-

tunity of four years of leisure for acquiring a literary background and perspective and taking possession of some portion of the precious inheritance that has been accumulating for them since Homer first "smote 'is blooming lyre," and the lawgiver of the Hebrews wrote, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

I was preaching to my friends who live in in-a-door apartments and in whose very select libraries I often find no book earlier than 1910, as Mark Twain said that a good Southern library contains no book later than 1860.

But I realize the futility of this caveat. The student journal of my own university severely declared a few years ago that the nature of Professor Shorey's studies makes it impossible for him to appreciate or sympathize with modern thought. Yet I preached conservatism mainly because, though the ordinary Main Street American does not yet vote red, all intellectual America reads and talks pink. The cliches and common-places of modern radicalism, or liberalism, if this is the fairer word, are inculcated weekly in all the literary reviews without exception, and in at least ninety-nine out of a hundred of all university

lectures and addresses. We never hear anything else. It can do us no harm to listen for once to a few qualifications of them.

Literature and life is a favorite topic of heavy-weight philosophers and light-armed belletristic feuilletonists. The philosopher steps in after the fact and proves that every literature must have been just what it was because of the economic, social, and political soil in which it was rooted. Literature is simply a by-product of superorganic evolution, they say. Man, says Taine, secretes literature as the silkworm spins its cocoon.

They proceed to correlate the epic with an abstraction called the heroic age, generalized from Homer, the *Chanson de Roland*, *Beowulf*, the *Nibelungenlied*, and the *Edda*, with total disregard of the quality that makes the *Iliad* the world's greatest poem. They show how the courts of the tyrants and the life of the Greek colonies that fringed the Mediterranean inevitably replaced the epic by personal and choral lyric. They demonstrate that the city-state of Athens and the London of Shakespeare were the predestined cradle of the drama; and they have no difficulty in proving that the

novel is the natural vehicle for the portrayal and criticism of modern life.

The prophets of a new and different American literature, and Walt Whitman, their later mouthpiece, proclaimed that all European art was undemocratic, feudal, monarchical, petty, obsolete, and predicted that the untrammeled democracy of America would create a literature as much broader and sturdier as America's prairies are wider, its rivers longer, its mountains higher, its buffaloes shaggier. It is a pretty game; but, whether it be science or pseudo-science, I need not stop to play it or criticise it further here.

No less fertile and ingenious in suggestion are the literary critics. They sometimes start from the thesis that literature and literary criticism have no appreciable influence on the life of the great mass of mankind. Literature is the affair of select, but small and, except to themselves, insignificant coteries. This entertaining paradox was frequently sustained by such French critics as Anatole France and Jules Lemaitre, and found echoes in England and America. "What in the name of the Bodleian has the general public to do with literature?" exclaimed Mr. Augustine Birrell.

And Mr. Mencken, in his disdain of democratic "boobery," abounds in the same sense, though the books that he rebukes the public for neglecting are not on the same shelf of the Bodleian with those that constitute real literature for Mr. Birrell.

Under the pen of a ready writer this self-depreciation of the litterateur assumes an engaging air of modesty. How should I, he seems to say, a mere scribbler, flatter myself that I can influence the conduct of the great mob of dollar-chasers and bread-winners to whom the name of the author is as unimportant as it is to the adapter of a film "continuity," and who, if they read at all, read not to criticise life, but to escape from it and kill time?

It is love and hunger and the pursuit of wealth, votes, and power that make the world go round, and the writer of books is only the fly on the wheel, the cock who thought he crowed the sun up. The course of history is determined by deep-seated social and economic forces, not by sentences out of books. This depressing view of his own insignificance may overcome any writer in his discouraged moods. Plato himself asked, "What man

would choose to be Homer the singer if he might be Homer's hero, Achilles the doer?"

Tennyson cries:

"Ah, God! the petty fools of rhyme,
That shriek and sweat in pygmy wars
Before the stony face of Time
And looked at by the silent stars."

and Kipling in his last book, *A Diversity of Creatures*, moralizes:

"What man hears aught except the groaning guns?
What man heeds aught save what each instant brings?
When each man's life all imaged life outruns,
What man shall pleasure in imaginings?
So it hath fallen as it was bound to fall,
We are not, nor we were not, heard at all."

An amusing inversion of this thesis is Oscar Wilde's paradox that life imitates literature and not literature life. There are fashions in complexions, stature, and conversation, as well as in gowns; and in both cases they are often dictated to life by art and literature, not copied from it. Gibson and Beardsley created the Gibson and the Beardsley girls. For many years French boule-

vard fiction determined the ideals of all Latin youths who would be devils of fellows, and of the young gallants of all Latin America, Russia, and the minor European nationalities. Pierre Loti's novel, *Désenchantées*, is an interesting example of this reverse-French. Loti thought he was expressing the life of the new Turkish women and the new freedom of Constantinople. He was in fact writing up a hoax played upon him by three cosmopolitan dames of Constantinople who had read the books which record his other adventures in this kind. And yet, so intricate are the interactions of literature and life, this very book, based on an unreality, went into two hundred and twenty thousand copies and did much to further the cause of the emancipation of Turkish women.

These and other variations on the theme might be reduced to two heads—the attempt to make the study of literature a science, and the endeavor to free literature from all social responsibilities, all obligations to conventional decencies and traditional moralities.

With the pseudo-science, which makes much of the teaching of English literature a pretentious futility, we are not further concerned

here. But the other topic, in its various ramifications, is the indispensable prelude to what I intend to be my main text—the cumulative effect of our habitual reading on our lives. All philosophies of literature that overlook or deny this influence stand in the way of any serious consideration of it. Take, for example, the entertaining topic of fashion in literature, on which I have in my barrel a perfectly good Phi Beta Kappa oration, though not as good as Mr. Galsworthy's clever skit, "Time, Tides and Taste." Some of the world's keenest critics have said that they know of only one established law in the science of literature, the law of the reaction of the sons against the taste of the fathers,—a law illustrated, for example, in well-known scenes of Aristophanes' *Clouds* and Thackeray's *Newcomes*. There are undoubtedly fashions in speech, philosophy, scholarship, and medicine —to which last, satirists from Moliere to Alphonse Daudet, Bernard Shaw, and Jules Romains have done ample justice—as there are fashions in art, music, dancing, girls and girls' names and Bohemian restaurants. Matthew Arnold cites as too ludicrous for criticism Pope's translation of the moonlight

scene in Homer, which Tytler, writing in 1790, selects to show how nobly Pope has improved on his original. A heroine of Jane Austen is "driven wild" by "those exquisite verses of Cowper" which would leave a flapper of 1928 "more than usual calm." From hundreds of like instances it would be easy to infer the absolute relativity of all literary tastes and judgments, with the practical conclusion that no literary criticism is of the slightest use. We need not select our own or guide our children's reading. We have only to follow the fashion in the lists of best sellers. Plausible as a clever writer can make the argument, the conclusion revolts common sense.

A well-known aphorism of a German materialist runs: "Der Mensch ist was er isst," or, in the vernacular, "It's eats that win the battle of life." But in speaking of or to the college-bred, it would be more pertinent to say that what you've read makes your head. There are plenty of exceptions, but, broadly speaking, the dependence of culture upon reading still holds for the student in an American university of the Middle West. As Bromfield Corey says in Howell's *Rise of Silas Lapham*, speaking of bookless Americans, "They are not

unintelligent people, they are very quick and they are shrewd and sensible. I have no doubt that some of the Sioux Indians are so. But that is not saying that they are civilized. All civilization comes through literature now, especially in our country. A Greek got his civilization by talking and looking [Howells is evidently thinking of a passage of Macaulay about Athenian education, too long to quote]; in some measure a Parisian may still do it. But we who live remote from history and monuments, we must read or we must barbarize."

Other theories that would emancipate literature from all responsibilities and controls, and relieve us from the burdens of choice and guidance, are the apologies for realism, the repeal of reticence, the assertion of the sacrosanct right of the artist to follow his own inspiration or caprice, and, summing them all up, the flat denial that literature has anything to do with morals or that society has any right to censor or a conservative critic to censure.

These theories are, so to speak, interlocking directorates and need not be kept sharply apart. The initial fallacy of the realists, or,

as they sometimes call themselves, the veritists, seems to be the assumption that only the ugly is real, and that the seamy side should always be turned outward. There is a profounder philosophy in the warning of Keats, Ruskin, and Alfred de Musset that in the deeper sense nothing is real or true that is not beautiful. That is not mere sentimentality; at the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia—of letters and harmony, let us say—the Greek muses sang "That which is lovely we love, and that which is ugly we love not." Whether the sense of beauty refers us to a Platonic idea that "sweetly torments us with invitations to its inaccessible home," or whether it be a God-given instinct or only a by-product of superorganic evolution,—whatever, in short, our theory of its origin—the instantaneous and peremptory perception of beauty is the surest sign we have that something is right and true, as the shock of the ugly is the most certain warning that something is false and in the highest sense unreal. An unbeautiful fashion in literature is self-condemned and cannot escape damnation by the trick of calling the characteristic the beautiful or exhorting us to "face the facts." What

facts are most significant is the very question. "God defend me," says Emerson, paraphrasing Plato, "from ever looking at man as an animal." But the pseudo-scientific doctors who deduce their criticism of life from biology tell us that we ought to think more and not less of our animal nature and origins, that we ought to gloat and brood on the subject as Christian novices were taught to meditate the life of Christ—and they have converted the poets. "Open my eyes to vision," prays Mr. Untermeyer, "but always let me see the dirt and all that spawn and die in it." "Behind the hedge of cactus the smell of a dead horse mingles with the smell of tamales frying," writes Mr. Fletcher, and Miss Amy Lowell comments, "I have heard it objected that tamales are never fried—as a matter of fact, that is so, but is not the soul of Spain in that poem?" That is, never mind the facts; if it only smells bad enough, it is realism.

The allied topic of "the repeal of reticence" is not easy to discuss, because to talk of it at all is to violate the principle of reticence and lose the touch we talk of. For the rest, the common sense of the matter has been so conclusively declared by Cicero and Quintilian

and scores of successors down to Lowell, O. W. Holmes, and Howells that further elaboration of the argument would be unprofitable. This is not the first or the second time that fashion has tried to banish decency from literature, and the effects on literature have never been encouraging. The joke, if it is one, soon grows stale. Back in 1683, in the days of Charles II of licentious memory, Shadwell wrote:

"The gloss is gone that looked at first so gaudy.
'Tis now no jest to hear young girls talk bawdy."

Or, as a recent epigram puts it: "Now they have found they can talk about everything, they don't talk about anything else." If the canon of Victorian literature was "Thou shalt not shock a young lady," the slogan of today might seem to be, "Thou canst not shock a young lady." I have no license or authority to preach. It is the cheapness, the ease, the triviality, the tiresomeness of the thing that justifies a protest. Anybody can talk or write sex. It is the line of least resistance. And the habit not only, as Burns implies, "hardens a' within, and petrifies the feeling,"

but it monopolizes the attention and distracts the mind from the infinite variety of better things—better things to talk about, at any rate. Not of any practitioner of the new "frankness" will it ever be said, as Sir Rennell Rodd wrote of Tennyson:

"Never a girl in England, or in England over the sea,
But wakes to her life's first love-dream sweetlier souled for thee."

The passionate assertion of the artist's independence, his right to treat any subject in any way, will always win the favor and excite the fervor of the artist himself. "I have as much right to write of Chicago as Dante of Florence," cacophonously exclaims somewhere the bard of the hog-butcher for the world. To which the aptest answer is that of Socrates to Polus in Plato's *Gorgias:* "It would be monstrous if in the city where there is most license of all the world you were not allowed to say what you please. But it would be equally unfair to deny me the right of not listening."

The absolute right of the author to liberty of prophesying was first emphatically proclaimed by the French, German, and English

poets of the romantic revolution. His genius his inspiration, his personality, were the only laws to which the artist owed allegiance, and to thwart, control, or in any way interfere with their impulsions was the sin against the Holy Ghost. The realists invoke the human and democratic equality of all subjects and all styles for the same purpose.

Lastly came the Italian philosopher and critic, Croce, whose followers, from his assumption that all art is expression, deduce the conclusion that the successful expression of the ugly is beautiful, the convincing expression of the trivial is significant, and the intense expression of the immoral is moral.

The net outcome of these and similar philosophies of criticism is that affirmation of the autonomy and self-determination of literature which is the entire stock in trade of the most conspicuous school of present-day critics and reviewers. All other laws, duties, truths, and obligations are subject to exceptions and doubt. But the right of the literary artist to disregard all possible social, moral, political consequences of his teaching, and consult only his genius, his inspiration, his caprice, is the one stable point in a Heraclitean and Ein-

steinian universe of relativity and *panta rhei.*

The contrary view, the necessity of some form of social control of art and literature, whether by law or public opinion, is first and most impressively maintained in Plato's *Laws* and *Republic,* and then by a long line of successors whose arguments I cannot even summarize here.

In America the discussion has degenerated into a logomachy and issued in a deadlock because of the persistent refusal to make elementary and indispensable distinctions. The ground constantly shifts without warning from the abstract right of social control to the expediency of advertising a particular indecent or scurrilous novel by persecution.

It is the systematic tactics of radical critics to treat all expressions of disapproval and all deprecation of the abuse of the freedom of literature as a proposal to invoke the secular arm. But nowhere in this discussion do I intend to suggest the censorship of literature by the police. I speak solely of the preferences and discriminations of individual taste, and the legitimate exercise of personal influence. Mr. Mencken talks recklessly of libraries that burn the works of Miss Jane Addams and ban

beautiful books that speak frankly of sex, and he tells of librarians intimidated by the town parson and the American Legion or the mayor. There may be a few other such villages besides Chicago. But in the country as a whole the balance inclines far the other way. The banning of one indecent or antipatriotic or irreligious book raises a hue and cry throughout the land. But nobody pays any attention to the fact that the reading commended to the attention of the young by libraries, university reference shelves, and book reviews is in a steadily increasing proportion erotic, revolutionary, antinational, socialistic, moral or immoral, radical, in short, in its suggestions when not in its direct teachings. And the most pertinent fact in my experience of American freedom of speech is that I could not without giving deep offense criticise soberly and seriously Miss Addams's published works now on the reference shelves of the Chicago Public Library or speak in Denver a paragraph which I have cut out from this paper, about a Denver author whose works I found well-thumbed in the women's dormitory of a Southern college.

Now the common but often overlooked cause of these contradictions and diversities of opinion is the simple fact that nearly all current literary criticism, discussion, and reviewing of books expresses the point of view of the producers of literature, or the authors and the publishers. But what chiefly concerns us as readers, parents, and teachers is the interest of the consumer. The two may sometimes, but need not always, coincide. The world of literature is open to the reader, and an old book, if it meets his needs, is as good as one published yesterday. It is the writer who is jealous of the competition of the dead hand. The normal, the classic, the familiar technique of story-telling, dramatic composition, poetic rhythm and diction, combined with wholesome matter, is to the average reader as good as, and for the child in school better than, the latest tricks and fashions of art. It is the practising novelist, dramatist, poet, who cares more for what he may learn from the latest experiments than for all old fashions and procedures that have stood the test of time. And so it comes to pass that the loan library of a great American university hands out to young girls the unspeakable soliloquies of the

nastiest of Irish novels that blasphemes the name of Homer. Is it not an example of the modern technique of the "stream of thought" on which Mrs. Gerould descants in the *Literary Review?*

So of book reviews. The reader wishes a review to inform him of the contents and character of a book, and to pass a reasonable judgment on its merits from the point of view of common sense and accepted traditions and standards. The reviewer desires to display his own talent, to support a propaganda, to flatter a friend or depreciate an enemy. The reader's interest is to discover in spite of misleading reviews and untrustworthy advertisements some of the many sane and well written books that have not won popular vogue and are virtually unknown. The publisher's temptation is to force upon all readers the books that have reached the rank of best sellers and which are not always, or even usually, the best books. For no reasonable person can maintain that there is today any presumption that the best advertised and best selling books are the best. Take the novels that we read. For example, Mr. Reginald Wright Kauffman's *A Man of Little Faith* is unquestionably a

better novel than the far more notorious *Elmer Gantry*. It is a true, penetrating, faithful and sincere, if not entirely friendly study of the problems that embarrass the minister of the ordinary American Protestant Church in our age of transition and readjustment. It is not, like Mr. Sinclair Lewis's best seller, a venomous and irresponsible caricature.

So in the field of literary criticism all my students know Mr. Mencken. Few of them are acquainted with Mr. Lacelles Abercrombie or Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, not to go back to Andrew Lang and Matthew Arnold and Leslie Stephen, and not one of them has heard of Mr. Gosse. But no intelligent person who had read both Mr. Gosse and Mr. Mencken could have any doubt which is the more edifying and in the end the more profitable and interesting reading. Everybody is acquainted with Mr. Norman Angell's sophistries; how few have ever heard of Mr. Coulton's *Main Illusions of Pacifism*, in which they are exposed? The radical propagandas of Mr. H. G. Wells spread throughout the world. Nobody heeds the splendidly eloquent reply to them of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones.

In short, quite apart from the counsel of perfection that is supposed to bid us to read only the greater classics there is another consideration of more direct practical significance which we disregard. Both in our reading of contemporaries and in our selections from the literature of the past we prefer the sensational, the flashy, the paradoxical, the irrational, the flimsy writers to the reasonable, well-informed, judicious, fair-minded thinkers who did not happen to achieve the front page with murderers and bandits, but whom a little inquiry would enable us to discover. One of the best informed American critics recently permitted himself to compare Godwin, Shelley's disreputable father-in-law, with Plato. But nobody tells a yonug man how much more profitably, and, if he has any intelligence, more pleasantly, he would be employed in reading Sir James Mackintosh's *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy* than in the study of Mr. Durant's *Story of Philosophy*. Current criticism exalts Thoreau above Emerson, and above Lowell, whom it rarely mentions without a sneer. But the undergraduate who reads Lowell would receive a liberal education in English and comparative literature. The

reading of Thoreau might quicken his sensibility for nature but otherwise would do little for him except confirm him in moods of fruitless revolt and sentimentality. This does not mean that you should not read Thoreau and his kind. Read him if he appeals to you. But read also Lowell's essay on him and reflect. Don't accept on faith and parrot the radical formulas of the New York weeklies.

But to return to the literature of the day and the opposition between the consumer's and the producer's interest. The reader, and still more the parent and teacher, may rightly consider the moral influence and spiritual tone of the books that are to color his own imagination and determine the direction of his children's thoughts. The writer fiercely resents the slightest hint of restriction on the caprices of his inspiration, on his right to paint the world as he sees it, and to propagate whatever his mood holds for truth without regard to any consequences to his readers or society. Whatever exceptions may be taken to some of these antitheses, whatever possible reconciliations may be found for them, the broad fact of the opposition between the two points of view remain. It is fundamental to any serious dis-

cussion of the relation of literature to the actual human life of the great mass of readers.

In current discussion everything is made to turn on the question of censorship and the regulation of our reading by the police. The arguments are familiar to weariness: the principles of Milton's *Areopagitica* and the indignity of prescribing to free spirits, the impossibility of finding a censor whom we can trust, the futility of advertising sensationalism or indecency by the very endeavor to suppress them. I shall evade these tiresome repetitions by not considering the question of official censorship at all. But our right to select and to censor our own and our children's reading will hardly be challenged by the most radical denouncer of American Puritanism and hypocrisy. It is not only a right, but so far as we can have duties towards ourselves, a duty. The choice of our reading in its cumulative effect year after year is no slight matter; and most of us always and all of us sometimes allow it to be determined for us with incredible levity. "A man's life of each day," said Matthew Arnold, "depends for its solidity and value on whether he read during that day, and far more still, on what he reads during it."

"Do you know," asks Ruskin, "if you read this you cannot read that?—that what you lose today you cannot gain tomorrow? Will you go and gossip with your housemaid when you may talk with queens and kings . . . or . . . jostle with the common crowd for entrance here and audience there while all the while this eternal court is open to you?" But familiar to satiety as we are with these admonitions and exhortations of eloquent essayists on books and reading, we manage our own reading as if we had never heard of them.

This is not intended as a pedantic counsel of perfection that we should read only classics or works on the list of the hundred best books or on President Eliot's five-foot shelf. It is as permissible to read for entertainment or escape or even to kill time as it is to use the movies, bridge, or solitaire for a like purpose. Ruskin himself makes ample allowance for the literature of firm fact telling and portrayal of contemporary life. And there is the further consideration, developed by Mr. Balfour and by the late Mr. Payne in an essay on hypocrisy in literature, and abused by the new pedagogy, that we sometimes like to be fed from a low crib, and that we learn more from, and may

be more stimulated by the literature that is nearer the habitual tone and level of our own thoughts. We cannot always breathe on the heights; even Lowell once wrote, "The Grecian gluts me with its perfectness." Supreme literature sometimes affects us as the marbles of the Parthenon did Keats,

"Our spirit is too weak, mortality
Weighs heavily on us like unwilling sleep."

But all these allowances granted, it remains true that life-long habituation to the winnowed and sifted best of the world's literary inheritance brings its sure and ever acceleratingly increased reward in the clarification of our ideas, the ennobling of feeling, the refinement of sentiment, and the self-companionship of a mind stored with high thoughts and gracious and beautiful images.

In a world where final happiness so often eludes the convulsive grasp of our more ambitious strivings, is it not folly to neglect so sure and certain a provision for a happy old age as this?

It is dangerous to argue from a metaphor. But the comparison of our reading to food is a real analogy which might be developed, wit or fancy aiding, with balanced ration, whole

wheat bread, made dishes, sauces, condiments, pepper and sweets. Books are in the inscription over the Berlin Library: untrimentum spiritus. But there is this difference between ideas and food, says Plato, that you can take home food in a vessel and eat it or leave it as prudence and the advice of a physician determine; but ideas you take at once into the vessel of the mind, which is helped or hurt by them. As Lowell puts it,

> "For reading new books is like eating new bread:
> One can bear it at first, but by gradual steps he
> Is brought to death's door of a mental dyspepsy."

But to drop metaphor and come to grips with the simple facts, the literary artist may prefer to read new books to learn the latest tricks of technique. An inquisitive elderly or middle-aged mind may indulge its discursive curiosity with no great harm. The scholar, stabilized by heavy ballast of better reading, may safely explore these waters to prove himself an adventurous spirit or learn why the people imagine vain things. But why should the mass of educated men and

women, or those students whose reading will still exercise a formative influence on intelligence and character, feed their minds exclusively or mainly on the innutritious, if sometimes stimulating, confections of contemporaneous literature?—Of any contemporaneous literature, but especially that of an age of jazz or transition and disintegration? Why, above all, should we encourage or allow such literature to preoccupy the attention and the memory of high school and collegiate youth? One of my brightest pupils, who however cannot write clear, unaffected English, has read all of Anatole France's clever and charming, if you please, but sex-spiced, incoherent, leering, sneering, ironical novels. He has never read a word of the novels that constitute Howells's American Comedie Humaine, the English of which alone would have served his education better than a score of courses in the improvisation of daily themes. And another too much advertised undergraduate admirer of Anatole France may be presumed to have meditated on the great sentence in the *Jardin d'Epicure*, "C'est beau, un beau crime." Others have all the catch-words of Nietzsche, Freud, and Schopenhauer's lightest and most

cynical essays at their tongue's end, but have never read a line of John Stuart Mill. Mill is out of fashion, there is no other reason. For there is quite certainly no better, saner, more edifying, instructive, disciplinary and formative reading available for a young man today than the four volumes of Mill's Essays and Dissertations. Others have read Mr. G. B. Shaw's mountebank preface to *Androcles and the Lion*, but have never heard of the nobler treatment of the conflict of Christianity and Paganism in Racine's *Polyeucte* or read Arnold's penetrating essay on "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment." They know Professor Murray's fantastic "Rise of the Greek Epic" but not Arnold's basic essay "On Translating Homer." Others are alive to an allusion to Spoon River or Amy Lowell or Vachel Lindsay, but do not react to a latent quotation from Tennyson, Milton or Shakespeare. The dozen volumes of John Morley, replete with thought, instruction and suggestion, are terra incognita—they think you are referring to the estimable Christopher Morley. It would be tragic, were it not comedy of the kind portrayed in Howells's literary conversation between an uncle and

a niece who had never heard of the Spectator or Leigh Hunt. The uncle admits, "I can't stand Ben Jonson at all," to which she replies, "Oh, yes, *Rasselas*, I'm quite with you [there] about Ben Jonson—too much Johnson, you know." At which the uncle in turn looks blank; and as Howells wrote a few years ago, the younger readers will be baffled by the antiquity of the allusion, as the uncle was by its then contemporaneity.

The retort is too cheap and easy, that this is just fathers and sons over again, and that I am enacting the role of Horace's "Laudator temporis acti, se puero," of Colonel Newcome and of "Old English." But the true spirit of the classicist's teaching and the answer to the modernist's gibe are summed up in Mr. Chesterton's antithesis, "Tradition does not mean that the living are dead, but that the dead are alive." And even today Virgil and Horace have quickened the sense of poetry in more minds than any living poet.

I am acquainted with both fashions and am as eery as anybody of what was merely temporary fashion in Victorian literature. But the tyranny of present fashion prevents our young people from giving the good older

literature that has survived, and by which they might profit, a chance. The fault is not theirs; it is in the teachers, the reference shelves in their courses, the open shelves of the public library, and the dispensaries of up-to-date literature only.

To estimate literature by the residuum of knowledge, common sense and sane habits of thought that it deposits in the mind will seem a crude criterion to the craftsman, interested only in the progress of technique, or to the Utopian, indifferent to everything but the propaganda of his world-saving idea. But it is one perfectly reasonable test to apply to the reading of the undergraduate, or to your own reading, so long as you still regard it as contributing to the moulding of your mind. Concede all that is claimed for the superior artistry and stimulating power of the fashionable books of the day. They are certainly less instructive than their predecessors. I mean something very simple. An ambitious French youth who had mastered his Taine, his Sainte-Beuve and his Renan would know a great deal more history, literature and philosophy than one who has steeped himself in Anatole France and Remy de Gour-

mont. Or, I am tempted to say, who had run through all the hundreds of authors mentioned in Rene Lalou's *Histoire de la Litterature Francaise Contemporaine.* An American youth who had assimilated the entire contents of Lowell's writing, or, to take a living author, of Paul Elmer More's *Shelburne Essays,* would be better prepared for serious university work in English and comparative literature than one who had dabbled in all the authors selected for overpraise in Van Doren's history of literature from 1890-1925. What would a reader who had at his fingers' ends, I will not say Amy Lowell or the laureate of Spoon River, but so excellent, so varied, so human, so expressive a poet as John Masefield—what would such a reader know as compared with one who fully understood his Tennyson or his Browning? What would a wilderness of Ben Hechts, D. H. Lawrences, Scott Fitzgeralds, Sherwood Andersons and Aldous Huxleys teach an undergraduate compared with what he might learn from the nine volumes of the real Huxley's collected essays, or the writings of Leslie Stephen or Matthew Arnold? Concede the doubtful proposition that Mr. Dreiser in *An American Tragedy* has at last produced

a masterpiece. What will collegiate youth learn from the time-wasting perusal of its nine hundred pages that they might not and do not acquire as well or as ill from newspaper reports of the Loeb and Leopold trial? The great truth, perhaps, that a Salvation Army education is a poor defense against the solicitations of life, and that it is difficult to determine the responsibility, the moral culpability of weak wills and undisciplined minds. These may or may not be vital truths. But contrast their elementary simplicity and crudity with the range, the wealth, the subtlety of thought, the observation of character, the experience of literature and life condensed in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, and ask yourself which book you would prefer a class of students whom you were trying to civilize to have read. And, unfortunately, the very brightest students are betrayed by this literature that teaches them so little into a most unsocratic confidence that they know all. It may be open-mindedness that leads them to the most adventurous experiments and speculations, but the outcome of such reading is the reverse of the open mind. It provides a few ready-made formulas, snap-judgments and

peremptory prejudices by which to estimate and condemn out of hand everything in the literature and thought of the past, that to superficial inspection seems to contradict the prevailing fashion of the present. If modern science has confirmed the dictum of Heraclitus that all things flow and change, if Westermarck and Frazer have shown that moral ideas are only the herd instinct and taboos of the tribe, if Darwin has proved that the species and kinds of things are not fixed but flow into one another by insensible gradation, if Nietzsche has proclaimed that Christian ethics is the slave morality of the weak, if Remy de Gourmont and Anatole France reiterate that the decency of the older American literature is only the impotence or the jealousy of undersexed and fanatical Puritans, if Einstein's mathematical doctrine of relativity, which nobody can understand, has become confounded beyond all unscrambling with the vague notion that nothing is certain and all things are relative, which everybody can too easily understand—the victims of the crude but insistent propaganda of these and similar notions in recent literature, inquire, discriminate, distinguish and define no further.

These formulas become the touchstones by which they interpret, judge, and often dismiss without any effort to understand them, the entire literature, history and philosophy of the main European tradition as if it were yesterday's *Chicago American*, last week's *Saturday Evening Post*, last month's *American Mercury*, last year's best seller, or last decade's theory of the atom or the germ cell.

And once more, since it is so easy to be misunderstood, let me protest that I am not indiscriminately disparaging the literature of today, though I do think that the genius of our age manifests itself more effectively in science and big business than in pure literature. I am not maintaining the preposterous thesis that we ought to read only or mainly the classics of the past. I am merely repeating what ought to be a commonplace of common sense that we should try to preserve some perspective and some sense of values in our reading, and that there is a presumption that the selected best of thirty centuries outweighs the productions of any single decade, however progressive, smart, sophistical, and scientific.

But there is something deeper than mere knowledge that is cumulatively determined by the habitual quality of our reading. The coloring of our imaginations by the images on which we allow our minds to dwell is more than a metaphor. The text that bids us think on whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report may not have been precisely so intended, but it is applicable here. Yet under the specious pretexts of realism, verity, facing the facts and the scientific attitude, the most widely advertised literature of today is accustoming a whole generation to brood persistently on whatsoever things are cynical, unjust, hideous, squalid and of ill report. The forward-looking thinkers of the entire American newspaper press ridiculed the aged Tennyson for his denunciation of the literature that would "set the maiden fancies wallowing in the troughs of Zolaism." America no longer needs to import such literature. We produce it, praise it in the weekly literary reviews, and place it on the reference shelves for classes in English. We have plenty of ready-made formulas in justification of this new freedom and the truth that has made us so free. But we are

going directly against common sense, the experience of the race, and the admonitions of the wisest teachers from antiquity down.

One ancient version of the petition, "lead us not into temptation," was the prayer of the philosopher Democritus that he might meet gracious and propitious images in his passage through life. It is no less significant because of its reference to an obsolete scientific theory. The theories of science come and go, common sense and fundamental criticism of life abide. Democritus was thinking of the atomist doctrine that every object and every event in the universe is represented by detached films or scales that float about the world and may find an entrance into our minds, and he asked whatever gods there be that the casual contacts of life should fill his mind only with gracious images.

When the poet of atomism, the Roman Lucretius, felt insanity creeping upon him the first symptom was the besetment of his mind by horrible images which in Tennyson's poem he styles

> "The phantom husks of something foully done

And fleeting through the boundless universe."

Is there any better designation for much of the most loudly commended new fiction and new psychology? And, may we not ask ourselves the further pertinent question.

"How should the mind, except it love them, clasp
These idols to herself?"

The insanity of a nation is, I suppose, a figure of speech, and there are many causes of the Russian madness besides the books which the literate classes of Russia wrote and read. Yet there must be some connection of cause and effect between the doom that overtook educated Russians, and the thoughts, the images, the formulas in which their literature had been steeping their minds for fifty years. We may find still more pertinent and practical texts in the words of another great teacher of antiquity of the opposite school from Democritus in science and philosophy, Plato. I am not going to quote again eternally true but hackneyed passages of the *Republic* in which Plato anticipates the Wordsworthian doctrine of the moulding and formative influence of a beautiful environment on the spirit and temper

of academic youth. Very slight changes would transfer their application from the material environment of natural scenery, noble architecture, beautiful pictures and statues to the like qualities in the literature that shapes their thoughts, ennobles their feelings and colors their imagination. But Plato has a more distinct and explicit warning for educators who, in the pursuit of a scientific attitude, disregard the cumulative effect of early impressions on the plastic and sensitive mind: "It is not allowable for a soul to have been bred from youth up among evil souls, and to have grown familiar with them, and itself to have run the gauntlet of every kind of wrongdoing and injustice so as quickly to infer from itself the misdeeds of others as it might diseases in the body, but it must have been inexperienced in evil natures and uncontaminated by them while young if it is to be truly fair and good and judge soundly of justice. For which cause the better sort seem to be simple-minded in youth and are easily deceived by the wicked, since they do not have within themselves patterns answering to the affections of the bad."

But what have these academic preachments and Jeremiads to do with creative literature and the reading of mature men and women? Nothing, as I have already said, except for those who take their reading seriously, who plan it and refuse to be stampeded by the natural ambition of publishers to swell the output of best sellers, the natural jealousy of the producing modern author for the competition of the dead and sceptered sovereigns, the natural empressement of journalists and reviewers to please authors and publishers and keep things going. There is not the slightest danger that any of us will close his mind to the modern ideas that blow upon us from every quarter of the wind and find entrance at every pore like an African sandstorm. The commonplace of modernism are thundered with interminable iteration from every speaker's platform. Every teacher knows that there is no danger of his students missing these. The danger is rather that we shut ourselves out from our rich inheritance of the past, winnowed and selected and treasured by all-wise time and the secure judgment of the world. If we are to give our minds the balanced ration of which we were speaking, it

must be by deliberate choice and conscious effort. And the only practical help I can offer in conclusion is the experience that this is not so hard or distasteful as it seems, and that it is only the first step that costs. Older literature, even the literature of the Victorians, seems remote from present concerns. Its contemporary allusions are unintelligible or uninteresting, its fashions, its mannerisms are distasteful. A life-long bookworm and student is less exposed to this feeling. Yet it overwhelmed me in 1914, when, on the ship that bore me back from Europe, I wondered whether I could ever get interested in dead classics again. That fear passed in a week of teaching Homer. But even to this day I select among modern novels one that postdates 1914 in preference to one that portrays a life that did not know what was coming. And I have not yet recovered my lost interest in the political and military history of Europe from, say, 1600-1870. It seems so insignificant and petty in its scale. That is an accident. A more serious obstacle is the fact that while we can recover in a few moments the mood for the supreme things, for Homer and Shakespeare, there are many secondary and

tertiary masters, the thought of reading whom is often distasteful—say Virgil even, or Racine or Pope or Scott or Dickens. But, and here is the moral, we can always recover the taste for these by a few hours or days of reading. That may be a little easier for a professional student. But I do not think the difference amounts to much. "The true humanist," says Pater, "can never wholly lose interest in anything that has ever deeply interested humanity." You can overcome your first shrinking distaste and recover or acquire an interest in almost any good author, period, school or fashion of literature by a few hours, days or weeks, as the case may be, of resolute reading. I once acquired in a week's reading a taste for 18th century translations of the classics into Popian couplets—or at least an imaginative sympathy with the taste.

Is it worth while? Everyone must answer that question for himself. Those who have tried it, however imperfectly, would reply as Phaedrus answered Socrates under the plane tree by the Ilyssus while the cicadas overhead were chirping the tale how they were once men but, forgetting to eat in their passion for song, were promoted to be the mouth-

pieces of the eternal muse. Why else, said Phaedrus, should one care to live, save for the satisfactions that endure and leave no unhappy aftertaste?

The literature of escape is a fashionable catchword of current criticism. But what fantastic fairy-tale, what photographic or reportorial reflection of contemporary life, what Utopian forecast of better bread than is made of wheat or earned in the sweat of the brow, provides so sure and lasting an escape from the besetments, bewilderments, obsessions, and terrors of the modern mind in a mechanical and too high-geared civilization, as does the habit of dwelling in or sometimes visiting that serene world where the makers of European literature and the real creators of our true civilization breathe the ampler ether and the diviner air of the unity of the human spirit?

We may stay glued to our seat in the eye-baffling, three-ringed circus of unmitigated modernity if its clownings, its stunts, its gyrations, its curiosities, are all that our taste, our hearts, our minds require. But the world's palace of art, where Plato the wise fronts large-browed Verulam, and the Ionian father of the rest smiles down on the long line of his

poetic descendants, still stands open to us night and day. We have but to enter in to be made free of the one great society that alone exists on earth, the noble living and the noble dead.

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